

W. C. Ringerberg

THE LETTERS
of the
AMISH DIVISION

Translated and Edited

by

JOHN B. MAST



The Letters
of the
Amish Division
of
1693-1711

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Christian J. Schlabach

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A list of the ministers involved in this division, with their nationality and affiliation. Abbreviations: Fr.—French; Ger.—German; Sw.—Swiss; Menn.—Mennonite; Am.—Amish; Ver.—Verantwortung; Begeb.—Begebenheit; C.G.K.—Christliche Gemeinde Kalender; L.—Later; J.B.L.—John Bachman Letter; U.A.L.—Ulrich Amman Letter; C.L.—Confession Letter.

Amman, Jacob, Fr. Am.
Amman, Ulrich, Fr. Am.
Anken, John, Ger. Am.
Augsburger, Nicholas, Fr. Am.
Augsburger, Stickle, Fr. Am.
Bacher, Nicholas, Ger.
Bachman, John, Fr. Am. (L. Menn. *see* J.B.L. and C.L.)
Baer, John Henry, Ger. Menn.
Baltzley, Nicholas, Sw. Menn.
Baltzley, Ulrich, Sw. Menn.
Berkey, John, Sw. Menn.
Blassen, Michael, Ger. Am.
Blatschen, Rudolph, Ger. Menn.
Blum, Christian, Fr. Menn.
Blum, John, Ger. Menn.
Dollen, Christoffel, Ger. Menn.
Falb, Ulrich, Sw. Menn.
Fretz, Jacob, Ger. Menn.
Geiger, Peter, Sw. Menn.
Gerber, John, Fr. Am.
Gerber, Peter, Sw. Menn.
Gerrye, Henry, Fr. Am.
Gingerich, John, Ger. Menn.
Goldgraber, Peter, Sw. Menn.

Good, Jacob, Ger. Menn.
 Good, John, Ger. Menn. (L. Am. *see* U.A.L.)
 Gouman, Christian, Ger. Am.
 Grimmstetler, Daniel, Sw. Am.
 Gul, Peter, Sw. Menn.
 Habegger, Peter, Sw. Menn.
 Haegy, Phillip, Fr. Am. (L. Menn. *see* C.L. and
 J.B.L.)
 Holly, Christian, Ger. Menn. (L. Am. *see* U.A.L.)
 Huszer, Rudulph, Ger. Menn.
 Kaufman, Isaac, Fr. Am.
 Kaufman, Jacob, Fr. Am.
 Kaufman, John, Ger. Am.
 Kleiner, Jacob, Fr. Am.
 Kleiner, Valentine, Fr. Am.
 Lehman, Peter, Ger. Menn.
 Lohr, Jonas, Sw. Menn.
 Meier, John, Ger. Menn.
 Miller, John, Fr. Menn. (Müller Hans in Begeb.,
 Hans im Weiler in C.G.K.)
 Miller, Ulrich, Fr. Am.
 Millinger, Benedict, Ger. Menn.
 Moos, Jacob, Sw. Menn.
 Moser, Claus, Sw. Menn.
 Moser, Nocholas, Sw. Menn.
 Moyer, John, Fr. Am.
 Naegley, John Rudy, Ger. Menn.
 Neudammt, Christian, Ger. Menn.
 Neuhouser, John, Fr. Am.
 Oswalt, Ulrich, Fr. Am.
 Plank, Christian, Fr. Am. (L. Menn.)
 Plien, Christian, Ger. Menn.
 Reist, John, Sw. Menn. (Häuszli Hans in Begeb.)
 Rohrer, Dursch, Sw. Menn.

Roller, John, Fr. Am.
Roosen, Gerhart (of Hamburg), Ger. Menn.
Schneider, Benjamin, Sw. Menn.
Schneider, John Jogley, Sw. Menn.
Schwartz, Jacob, Sw. Menn.
Schwartzentruber, Peter, Sw. Menn.
Steiner, Christian, Fr. Am.
Wier, John, Fr. Am. (L. Menn. *see* C.L. and
J.B.L.)
Yoder, Yost, Ger. Am.
Zook, Christian, Ger. Am.
Zook, John, Ger. Menn.
Zimmerman, Peter, Fr. Am.
Zollfinger, Peter, Ger. Menn.

INTRODUCTION

These historic letters and documents pertaining to the Amish division have been preserved for us by various persons and institutions. A collection in the possession of Christian Brenne-
man was published by Joseph Stucky of Danvers, Illinois, in 1871, in a booklet entitled "Eine Begebenheit die sich in Deutschland und in der Schweiz von 1693 bis 1700 zugetragen hat." The fourth edition of this booklet was published, with the addition of the Jacob Amman letter, by L. A. Miller of Arthur, Illinois, in June, 1936.

Another collection belonging to John S. Steiner was published by John Moser of Bluffton, Ohio, in 1876 in a treatise entitled "Eine Verantwortung gegen Daniel Musser's Meidungs-Erklärung, welche er gemacht hat in seinem Buch, betitelt, 'Reformirte Mennoniten.' "

A third collection was a manuscript containing about ninety sheets of material which had been handed from one generation to another as a highly cherished family keepsake. It was possibly the first or not more than the second copy of the original and is believed to date back to about 1750. It became the possession of Peter Kipfer of the Raingut (a ranch or estate), near Langnau, in the Emme Valley in Switzerland, who contributed the entire manuscript to the editor of an annual publication entitled "Der Christliche Gemeinde Kalender." This was then printed at Kaiserslautern, Germany, in the editions of 1908, 1909, and 1915. I had ten of these

German letters printed in April, 1949, in a booklet entitled "Eine Erklärung über Bann und Meidung Geschrieben zur zeit der Amisch Spalt von 1693-1711."

It is with sincere gratitude that I acknowledge my indebtedness to the brethren who co-operated in making this material available: to the late C. Henry Smith of Bluffton, Ohio, for aid in securing copies of these German letters; to Milton Gascho, of Goshen, Indiana, who presented to me copies he had made from the afore-mentioned publications exhibited at the Historical Library at Goshen College, and also for information pertaining to the original causes of this schism as related in his article, "The Amish Division of 1693-1697 in Switzerland and Alsace," published in Volume XI, October, 1937, Number four of *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* and for assistance in proofreading, et cetera, to L. A. Miller of Arthur, Illinois, for his permission to use the contents of *Eine Begebenheit*, on which he has a valid copyright; to Mahlon Wagler of Partridge, Kansas, for geographical information supplied (for making our map) while serving in M.C.C. reconstruction work at Wissembourg, France.

The purpose of publishing these documents is to review the unfortunate consequences of concentrating on certain passages of Scripture to the exclusion of others, and then driving the issue to a point of division in the church by ruthless leadership. The fundamental objective of shunning as taught by the Apostolic Fathers and observed by the early Anabaptists was to preserve

the purity of faith; and social concourse with apostates is obviously more tragic than eating with them at the same table. We seemingly have retained the practice of shunning at natural meals, but have lost the real objective of abstaining "from all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22).

It is a foregone conclusion that the Apostle Paul recommended excommunication of the offending party referred to in I Cor. 5, but he also warns against excessive avoidance in a following Epistle. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. . . . Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." 2 Cor. 2:6, 7, 11.

To our brethren who assume the attitude that publication of records dealing with such controversial issues is somewhat out of place we might point out that both the Old and New Testament are largely such records, and the Apostle wrote: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3:16. The Old Testament portrays a conflict between Judaism and Heathendom. In the New Testament the battleground shifted from carnal warfare to a psychical conflict of invisible forces concerning which the Apostle Paul wrote: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against

powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12. This is much the same as the conditions referred to in Luke 12:51, 52: "Suppose ye that I come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: (Zwietracht in German, denoting disagreement) for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three." Many of these "household divisions" are recorded in histories of the Christian church by such works as that of Flavious Josephus (37-95), Thielman Janz van Braght (1625-1664), author of *Martyr's Mirror*, and other historians.

Note: All corrections or phrases appearing in parenthesis () have been added in this translation and did not occur in the original German version.

John B. Mast

The Letters of the Amish Division of 1693-1711

Prelude and Jacob Good letter (From *Eine Begebenheit* p. 7)

Historical Contributions of the Mennonite Church

An account of the events which occurred among the defenceless and nonresistant Christians in the year (1693) 1694. The third letter written from the Palatinate.

A man named Jacob Amman (of the Province of Alsace in France) contended that the observance of certain Christian practices had been lost in some measure and resolved to rebuild the Temple of God upon what he considered the old foundation. He introduced, in particular, a doctrine pertaining to the avoidance of excommunicated persons in which he demanded that the expelled be shunned in natural as well as sacramental eating. Whereupon it came to pass that all who would not confess this avoidance with him he expelled from the church. Therefore the people divided themselves into two groups which caused much discussion, but which did not produce good fruit. Then the ministers and bishops of the Palatinate, among whom were Jacob Good, Jonas Lohr, and John Rudy Naegley, wrote letters to him and his adherents thoroughly clarifying their views concerning avoidance. The fourth of these, the letter by Jacob Good follows:

Dear Brethren in Alsace in the congregation at Baldenheim: As I have written in my other letter in reply to the charges brought against us by our opponents, I shall now endeavor to the best of my ability, to write our understanding of I Corinthians 5, even as I personally discussed this teaching of avoidance with you and Amman.

When Jacob Amman quoted to me the passage, "with such an one no not to eat," I requested that he prove to me that the apostle was referring to the eating of a natural meal, then I would affiliate myself with their group: but this they could not do, and said the verse explains itself or in such manner they replied. My understanding of this, however, is as the apostle says: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators," which implies that he had written them in a previous letter not to company with fornicators, and in this letter he further explains himself with: "Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world."

From this I conclude that the Corinthians had understood he meant the fornicators of this world, with whom they should have no fellowship, and a fornicator in the church, who called himself a brother and whom they had recognized as a brother, they had not expelled. The apostle therefore rebuked the Corinthians with these words: "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" I do not understand that he referred to a natural leaven, but to the brother who was a fornicator and partook of the bread of Communion and by this spiritual leaven has defiled the Lord's Supper with Satan's supper,

since the Church of God cannot partake of both the Lord's table and Satan's table. (I Cor. 10:21.) I therefore understand that the apostle was here speaking of eating the Holy Sacrament and that they should not eat this in company with such, but "put away from among yourselves that wicked person." The apostle was speaking of excommunication and not of avoidance.

I understand that an expelled person shall first be admonished as a brother (II Thessalonians 3), and if he remains apostate, then he shall be avoided not only in eating and drinking but by discontinuation of all other concourse as well, which is also my understanding of its application in our Confession of Faith compiled in Holland. All those I have seen or of whom I have heard that practiced avoidance, practiced it in no other manner than is here written, as I also requested Jacob Amman and his group to follow their own convictions in the use of this avoidance and not try to impose it on others who could not understand it with them. I would accept them as brethren if they do this, and I hope we can again become reconciled if they confess the injustice of their unreasonable avoidance and discontinue the practice. And think of the disturbance Jacob Amman is making in his attempt to bring about a division among us who do not agree with him. He has not expelled Peter Geiger from the church for writing the letter; he has not expelled me, because with others, I neglected my obligations; he expelled us because we would not confess with him his avoidance and strict ban. Therefore investigate this matter thoroughly before

yielding to current talks, and listen to the other side of the case also.

You wrote us, "If the apostle had not referred to natural eating, he must have tolerated eating the Sacrament with the world." But this is not at all my contention, only those who call themselves brethren and live in worldly lusts shall be expelled and kept as heathen and publicans, yet as mentioned above, as brethren they should first be admonished to repentance. If they do not repent but scold and scoff, then they shall be shunned. I recognize the merits of true avoidance but its misapplication can incur much mischief as may readily be seen and which experience has often taught and proved, so that I presume Math-eis Zerfasz experienced it also wherefore he wrote from prison warning with these words, "Take heed in the use of avoidance lest it serve to your downfall. When not misused avoidance is desirable so long as it does not provoke to offence, but we must be careful that in our heedfulness to avoid a minor offence we do not influence a major one." He also admonishes (his congregation) to assume a friendly attitude toward all apostates: "Reminding them in all friendliness of that which they have lost: I refer to those who accept such admonition, but slanderers and scoffers should be left to their respective destiny. I write this to you, dear brethren, not as something new, but to rehearse the old, because it is my desire that you abstain from adhering so steadfastly to one passage of Scripture that another is thereby broken, for of late some have so suddenly fallen upon the practice of avoidance

without all modesty and compassion with those concerned. Therefore I counsel you to be careful." (See page 245, second part of *Martyrer Spiegel*.) Thus wrote Matheis Zerfasz from prison; and I might also recommend that you give this matter distinctive consideration.

Jakob Guth of the Palatinate.

Jonas Lohr Letter (From *Eine Verantwortung*, p. 29-31).

Let it be herewith known that you need not accuse us so severely concerning the letter we wrote to the (ministers) in Alsace, since we warned them not to consider too seriously such a man as Jacob Amman or to accept this new doctrine, and in which you have charged us with having believed liars, apostates, sectarians, and excommunicated persons, which letter we had only written in reply to the Alsatians' own letter written to us as follows: "We ministers and bishops in Alsace have deliberated on this matter and consider it necessary, if possible, to come to an agreement, by the help of God. You should counsel among yourselves as much as possible, because this is not a trivial matter; it is the renting of our faith mostly over this doctrine of avoidance.

"Jacob Amman demands that the expelled be avoided in natural as well as in Sacramental eating as appears in our Confession of Faith, and we in Alsace have formally adopted the practice. But we had been of the opinion that the entire brotherhood in Switzerland was also fully agreed, and having supposed the doctrine was Scriptural we were confident that Jacob Amman and his fellow ministers would not depart therefrom."

Now you can see that we have had sufficient reason to write them not to be influenced by such a man as Jacob Amman, or to regard similar views of others. Now you consider whether or not we have written the truth.

You wrote us you regarded no counsel of men and yet the Alsatians mentioned nothing more than the booklet of our Confession of Faith, on which they have based their convictions, and have only referred to you as having attempted to institute the practice of avoidance and that you would not abstain from it. Why then do you scold us as writers of falsehoods, when they state in their own letter, their misled opinion that the church in Switzerland was unanimous, not only in this but in another letter also; which is not the truth, and to which you yourselves must agree that it is not the case if there is any truth in you. And you have written in your long, vicious, insulting damnation letter, you would not regard any council of men, and then you refer to the Confession of Faith which was compiled in Holland, in the town of Dortrecht. Consider whether this was not also a statute of mortal origin on which you have founded your doctrine. From the New Testament you cannot bring forth such avoidance as you advocate, practiced or maintained by either Christ or His apostles. I say, prove to me where Christ or His apostles used or commanded to use such avoidance in eating or drinking toward any person who refused to follow their teachings as you are doing and have done. I repeat, prove it, which you can not do. What the apostle says in I Corinthians 5, does not refer to your avoidance, banning and expelling because he rebukes the Corinthians for not having put the fornicators out of the church, and says: "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Corinthians 5:6-8).

From this you can readily determine which eating and drinking he meant. It is clearly evident that he referred to the passover which the church of God observes in remembrance of the sufferings of Christ, at which ceremony they shall proclaim His death. Since this eating is not becoming to those who permit themselves to be called brethren and are fornicators, greedy, idolatrous, scolders, drunkards, or robbers. With these you shall not eat, namely, the church of God. Therefore he says, "Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth," and says further, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

Now you can plainly understand that those who commit the above-mentioned deeds shall be put away from the church and shall no longer be considered as brethren; neither eat the sacrament of communion, or have any further mutual church work with them, for as soon as one is expelled from the church he is no longer considered or called a brother, and there is no further mutual association with him either in eating or otherwise, as far as the ordinances of the church are concerned, because he stands outside the church of God, where his wicked deeds have placed him; therefore he is no longer a member

of the church of God, but is according to Paul's instructions, "put away." Now Paul says, "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? . . . But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

The Corinthians had understood from his former letter that he meant the fornicators of this world; so he now says he does not mean the fornicators of this world, but any man who is called a brother and indulges in the afore-mentioned vices, with him we shall not eat the sacrament, but put him out of the congregation and regard him as an unworthy member of the church with whom we no longer hold communion, and in things pertaining to the faith regard him as one of the world, until he repents. The apostle says in II Thessalonians 3:6, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." Eating and drinking is not mentioned here. In Titus three he says, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject." Here again eating is not mentioned, neither ban, nor scolding, nor slandering, as you and your adherents have done without Scriptural foundation and contrary to the doctrines of Christ and His apostles. Christ said, "Condemn not and ye shall not be damned; judge not and ye shall not be judged," which thing you have grossly done by drawing up documents in which you commanded that we must be judged, condemned, scolded, slandered, and shunned by all children of God, and this for the sake of an avoid-

ance which you attempt to force upon men, and in which we can not agree with you, because it has neither foundation nor fundament in the doctrines of Christ and His apostles.

You have forgotten Christ's parable of the king's reckoning (Matthew 19:23-35), when one owed him ten thousand talents (\$326,400,000.00 in gold) and pleaded for patience, whereupon his lord was moved with compassion and forgave his debt. But when this same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred pennies; he choked him and cast him into prison until he paid it all, thus you have done to us with this avoidance, seeking to strangle and cast us into prison until we pay you, that is, confess your avoidance with you. Moreover, beloved fellow servants, consider your predicament when you must bring such deeds before your Lord, who shall call you to judgment. And many more such teachings of Christ could be cited. Therefore reflect upon that which you have done to us and many others with your drive for avoidance, whether it conforms with the doctrines of Christ, and pray the Lord to open your understanding, and remove the blindness from your eyes and hearts, and enable you to acknowledge such gross errors which you have committed against the word of God with your unreasonably severe judgment, damning, and expelling, when you called us false prophets, sectarians, heretics, and liars, and that only for the sake of confessing avoidance with you, which we cannot do. You shall know, however, that we do not fear your avoidance, banishment, exclud-

ing, and scolding, because it is without foundation and divine love. We will therefore not withdraw from our ordained ministry, but will seek all the more zealously to exercise stewardship in the church of God. This, however; we say to you; leave those at peace who are likeminded with us, and do not look upon the splinter in another's eye, but see how you may bring the great beam out of your eyes. Think this over, you, who in your own letters, boast of being specially chosen of all people.

This from me, Jonas Lohr, whom you condemn.

Written August 28th, 1695.

John Rudy Naegley Letter (From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1909 p. 136-138)

Dearly beloved friend and Brother in Christ:

In weakness, we will now answer your letter, hoping it may meet with your approval, and that you might submit to calmness, considering that, since the outset of this rebellious division we have given its motives much deliberation. We are earnestly warned by the Apostle Paul: "That we . . . be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:14). Now as a faithful fellow brother, I request that you observe the fruit of this doctrine of avoidance, which, as a punishment, is being offered us. Considering that, although it has been practiced but a short time, yet what calamity, damage, and misery has already resulted. As the beast which (Jacob contended) has devoured Joseph, now ferociously snaps about seeking to devour us also. As you can perceive if you possess spiritual insight and desire to see and actually consider the basic principles of this innovation, as also you will find in our accusation that neither fraud nor deceit has been spared in the effort to disrupt our unity. And the person himself, upon whose word is entrusted such faith and confidence, has resorted to scolding without any Scriptural foundation, and his word is found untrue, and yet he is regarded as a messenger of God, sent to light the lamp of truth. I

hope you, too, will recognize the tree by its fruit. For salvation and the kingdom of God are not found in smooth words, or pleasant oration, nor in carnal wisdom; but much more in peacefulness, humility, and meekness, which, toward us has truly been denied by them, in words and deeds.

But now, my dearly beloved, establish yourselves upon the foundation of the Word of God, and heed the apostle's earnest warning to discern the Lord's body; and not mingle natural with spiritual eating as though the apostle had designated both in one word. If the apostle had said it must be discerned in a natural form, we would indeed know which is the natural manner, but he says we shall discern spiritual things spiritually (I Corinthians 2:13, 14) and he is referring to the spiritual passover (spiritual meat in I Corinthians 10:3, and the spiritual symbols of communion in verse 16) and that we should not observe these emblems with such as he mentions and thereby defile the Lord's table. (Verse 21.) Consider, dear brethren, how often it occurs that one is such a defiler, whose deeds are concealed from others, and partakes of this spiritual passover, is still in fellowship, regarded as a brother, and permits himself to be called a brother. When his deeds become manifest, which form of eating shall be withdrawn, the spiritual or the natural? I maintain the spiritual shall have preference here, and he be put away from the church. Then he is no longer called a brother, and cannot permit himself to be called a brother, but stands outside the church. Now the apostle says, "For

what have I to do to judge them also that are without? . . . But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

We then must not step before Christ and His apostles, but abide by their teaching as much as possible, neither take away from, nor add thereto, as our opponents have so boldly added, namely, natural eating, which may truthfully be called a proud presumption. In this also is fulfilled what the Apostle John complained in his third epistle concerning Diotrephes, "who loveth to have the preeminence among them, . . . prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, but forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (verses 9, 10). Which has also been done to us, since he not only refused to receive us, but has even circulated warnings forbidding the brethren to hear our sermons or to assemble with us, and has also cast us out of the church. And thus has occurred the division whereof the apostle writes: "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (I Corinthians 11:19).

Where or by whom the division has been plotted is sufficiently known, we shall therefore leave it to the righteous Judge, allowing it to calmly pass over us, and endeavor to promote peace as much as possible. For the kingdom of heaven is promised to the peaceable and not to the quarrelsome and rebellious. So if you desire to join with us, and abide in this peace, then cast aside the

dangerous snare of this article, which cannot be practiced without great peril and for which we have no commandment, and take heed as to how this article of the Confession of Faith was intended to be construed and practiced, and distinguish those who will not confess their errors, but defiantly scold. These are truly fallen and excluded from God and His church who will not confess but deny their faults. But they shall, first and a second time, be admonished and if they remain apostate, then they shall be avoided in external things as much as is expedient.

Herewith, beloved brethren, we have explained our views concerning avoidance, hoping you will understand and be content therewith. In closing we wish you friendly greetings and the grace of God. We sincerely request an interest in your prayers, and by the help of the Lord we shall also earnestly pray for you and all who strive to live according to the will of God. Amen

Kirchhäuserhof, May 6, 1694. John Rudy Naegley.

Jacob Amman Letter

(Written during his tour of Switzerland)

(From *Begebenheit* 1936 p. 58-85)

Besides very friendly greetings we wish you, in all sincerity, many natural and spiritual blessings, especially I, Jacob Amman, with my fellow laborers in the house of God, ministers and bishops in Switzerland, to you ministers and bishops in the Upper and Lower Palatinate. We request an interest in your prayers, and are also disposed to plead as the Lord gives grace. Amen.

We have further understood from your letter of October 16th, which we received November 3rd, 1693, that you were awaiting a correct account of the controversy concerning the Articles of Faith, which we must deplore. So then we will send you a detailed reply, and shortly inform you further in this letter.

The charges against John Reist (Höusly Hans) are these: first: I, Jacob Amman, sent Nicholas Moser and Peter Geiger to Hans Reist to ask him whether expelled persons should be avoided in both natural and spiritual eating, to which he replied: "That which enters the mouth is not sin" (Matthew 15:11). To this ministers and bishops are witness. Second: I, Jacob Amman myself, with ministers and bishops, went to him and asked him whether he could confess that the expelled should be avoided in natural and spiritual eating and drinking, but again he answered: "What enters the mouth is no sin, Christ also ate with publicans and sinners."

I also asked him if known liars should be expelled from the church, but he would not confess it, as he has also proved by his actions, actions indeed, that a reputed liar who had conceived falsehoods in her own heart, and because of evidence, admitted her untruth, yet he refused to expel her from the church. To this are witness with me Ulrich Amman and Christian Plank. Third: I sent John Gerber and Peter Zimmerman to John Reist to demand his confession that the expelled be avoided, but he would not answer them. Thereupon he wrote a letter stating that he would not adopt this commandment to avoid the expelled in both natural and spiritual eating. In the letter he also wrote that in matters concerning doctrines and church rituals not too much attention should be given younger men. To this are witness, ministers and bishops, and his own writings. This letter he circulated among ministers and bishops, warning not to consider seriously the teachings and ordinances of youths.

Prior to this, however, neither John Reist nor any one else had charged us of not having taught true Christian rituals and doctrines. Had we not preached the proper rituals and teachings of Christ, why then did he not correctively instruct us? If we did preach the genuine doctrines and Christian rituals, which we hope we did, why then did he circulate this letter among ministers and bishops, warning them to disregard the teachings of young ministers? Does not the Apostle Peter say we should heed a more sure word of prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a

dark place? For the Word of God is a light in our path, and when we abandon it we walk in darkness, and know not whither we go.

John Reist himself also told me, Jacob Amman, that his authority was above mine. Yet we are ordained to the identical ministry. Is this not a spiritual pride? It appears much as though he desires to dominate the heritage of our faith on the assumption that older ministers should be esteemed even though their word and doctrine does not conform to the Word of God. And that less consideration is due the teaching and ceremonies of younger ministers, as expressed in the writings of his misleading circle letter. Over and above this he also beatifies kindhearted persons, who do not conform to Christian faith and rituals, and who are not in accord with our mode of baptism and the observance of the Passover. These he consoles with salvation.

After that, and the fourth time we sent him one more message in an effort to instruct him in the faith, but he would not own up to the beating of the kindhearted. To this are witness with me; Stickle Augsburg and John Roller. Thereupon I have expelled John Reist from the Christian congregation and church of God, as an apostate, sectarian, and rebel because he has forsaken the true path and the heavenly hosts, and has led the people astray, for he was admonished more than once and a second time.

Concerning Nicholas Moser, Peter Geiger, Peter Swartzentruber, Peter Gerber, and Jacob Moos. I, Jacob Amman myself, with ministers and bishops, went to these men and asked them

if the expelled should be avoided; neither eating nor drinking with them. This was then confessed by Nicholas Moser and Peter Geiger, and also Peter Swartzentruber. But Peter Gerber and Jacob Moos refused to confess, but expressed a willingness to accept it if it were proved by Scripture. To this are witness with me: Nicholas Augspurger, Ulrich Amman, and Christian Plank.

Then I, Jacob Amman, with ministers and bishops, again went to these afore-mentioned men to determine how we should further conduct ourselves toward John Reist, who would not confess the faith with us, and has been careless therein. But they now refused to counsel, and retracted their former confession, even resisting with Scriptures, but without foundation. To this are witness with me: Nicolas Augspurger and Christian Plank. Some time later I, Jacob Amman, with ministers and bishops, went to them the third time and talked with them whether or not the expelled should be avoided. And we spoke to them in all friendliness and affection, offering to recant and be taught by them if they could reprove us with the Word of God. They quoted sufficient Scripture, but without foundation, also violently denounced their former confessions, and would no longer confess it. Thereupon they were expelled from the church of God as secretarians, and as those forsaking their pledge of loyalty, because they had once confessed belief in the article of avoidance, and had under such faith kept house with us for a season, acknowledging it as good and just and have

fallen away. (Hebrews 6:4-6) To this article are witness with me: Nicholas Augspurger, Ulrich Amman, Christian Plank, and others. In this incident was also involved John Miller of Argtau whom we had asked the first time concerning avoidance of the expelled, which he would not confess.

I, Jacob Amman, sent John Gerber and Christian Plank to Benedict Schneider and the aforementioned John Miller of Argtau, and they asked Benedict Schneider whether he had been asked about the article of avoidance. Then he admitted he had already been asked two times; so they asked him once more whether he could confess with us that the expelled should be avoided. He would not confess, but resisted violently. Also would not confess that known sinners should be expelled from the church. He also asserted that no one should be expelled except by unanimous counsel of the entire congregation, as though the keys (of the kingdom) were entrusted to all lay-members. At this time the aforementioned men again asked John Miller of Argtau if he would confess with us, this article of avoidance, but he would not confess. To this are witness the afore-mentioned bishops who spoke with them. Thereupon Benedict Schneider and John Miller were expelled from the church as sectarians.

As concerns Nicholas Baltzley, he confessed the faith with us, but he so flatly denied the truth, which has been proved by two witnesses. Therefore, as a liar, he has been expelled from the church of God. For the mouth that speaketh

lies killeth the soul. Wisdom 1:11. All who love and practice lies shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Revelation 21:8. For Satan is a liar and a father of lies, and those who knowingly speak lies are his servants and ministers, therefore, they shall, without any previous warning as any others who live in the lusts of the flesh, since Paul says: those who commit such deeds shall not inherit the kingdom of God. These shall be expelled without any previous warning, because such are sins unto death of which no one shall think that they may remain in the church and repent. The ban shall be executed outside the camp, namely, the congregation and church of God lest the entire church become subject to excommunication before the Lord.

What concerns brotherly chastisement, if one brother transgresses against another he shall be disciplined at first privately. If he amends his ways, it shall be forgiven him. But if he does not make amendment, he shall again be spoken to in the presence of one of two witnesses, and if he amends he shall be forgiven. If he does not mend his ways, then bring it before the church. If he then mends his ways he shall be forgiven. If he then will not confess his fall and sin because all sins must be confessed, both great and small, he shall then be expelled. Matthew 18.

Concerning secretarians, the Apostle Paul commanded in Titus 3: "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sin-

neth, being condemned of himself." For this reason these men were expelled, that they should be shunned and avoided. If any man teaches another doctrine and does not abide by the Holy words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is excluded and knows nothing. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the last . . ." All seeds not planted by the heavenly Father through His Son will be rooted out. Whosoever transgresses and abideth not by the doctrines of Christ, has no God.

You shall then know that these men were not abiding in the doctrines of Christ and His apostles. Therefore they have been punished, although they ignored the punishment, and despised their (the apostles') doctrines in every way. And have provoked a schism and division among the people, incurring a great tribulation and have led astray many people from the right path and heavenly highway. For we believe in the heart, and confess with the mouth that those who live in the lusts of the flesh, whether they be liars who knowingly speak falsehoods or commit other offences, of whom Paul said those who commit such deeds, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; these shall without previous warning be expelled, which several of our opponents not only would not confess, but also refused to do. Is this not a great presumption, that those of our opponents whom the strong word of God condemns and has denied access to the kingdom of heaven, that such persons should still be regarded as members of Christ, considered as brethren and

sisters, offering them a pledge of peace, and retaining natural and spiritual concourse in common with them, thereby saying Amen to their life and conduct? Remember that this would not be abiding in the doctrines of Christ and His holy Apostles.

We also believe in the heart and confess with the mouth that apart from the Word of God no one should be beatified. For there is but one Way that leads to life. There is but one faith that counts with God. There is but one people who are the bride of Christ. Are we not among this people? Have we not this faith? and are we not traveling the narrow path? We cannot enter life otherwise. But let it be far from us to judge or condemn anyone out of season, for we are well aware that the Scripture says: Condemn not and ye shall not be damned.

There is one who shall judge all people in due season, every man according to his works, namely, the Father, who has provided judgment. We also are unaware what grace the sinner may attain before his death. We have therefore condemned no one. We may well comply with the Word of God, however, in this conclusion, by saying: If the miser does not repent of his greed, or the fornicator of his fornication, or the drunkard of his drinking, or other offences which cut them off from the kingdom of God, and does not fully repent by complete amendment of their lives, that person is no Christian and will not inherit the kingdom of God. And when he is thus judged, it is not we who are judging, but the Scriptures, as Christ said: 'the word that

I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). For we know full well that God saves no one contrary to His Word, for it is the truth and there is no lie in Him. Where there is no faith there can be no regeneration, no repentance, and no amendment. Upon these Christ has already passed judgment when He said: "for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Even though someone whose life was blameless, said to himself: in my heart I can sincerely believe, I need therefore not leave my wife and children or desert my property. We may well consider what their reasons are, namely, that they prefer praise of man rather than of God, and wish to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ. Oh, such people are far from any resemblance of a true Christian confession.

It is said, "The disciple is not above his master." If you prefer to have it better than the Master, then you are not Christ's disciple. If the Master was scolded Beelzebub, then who are you, that you can not endure one little scornful word for His sake? Remember the words of the Lord when He said: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Also remember that He said: Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when He cometh in His glory. Whosoever shall deny Him before men, him will He also deny before His Father in heaven and before His holy angels. Whosoever

is unwilling to bear the reproach of Christ shall not share His honor and glory.

Without a truly regenerating faith it is impossible to please God. But whosoever has received this faith from God will be baptized in spite of all opposition, otherwise it cannot be the real faith, as Christ said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Whosoever has this true faith will forsake the ways of the world in spite of opposition, as the Apostle John says in his Revelation: "Come out of . . . Babylon, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Paul also said: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate." Christ said: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Whosoever will not leave his home, farm, father, mother, wife and children for my sake cannot be my disciple.

Anyone believing in the heart, but unwilling to confess with the mouth endeavors to serve two masters, and no one can simultaneously serve two masters who oppose each other. Christ said: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Paul said: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (I

Corinthians 10:21). And: "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). James also says: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Even though they console themselves by saying: I will bestow good deeds of mercy to the pious, because "blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward . . . and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward." With such Scriptures they comfort the kindhearted people, therewith consoling them of salvation, unmindful that the holy Apostle Paul said: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. . . . And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, . . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." All human fear is dispelled in him that has this abundant love toward God and his fellow men.

Let us also remember that even though Cornelius gave alms and prayed to God, so that his prayers and alms came into remembrance before God, yet he had to send for Simon, who told him what he must do (Acts 10), and he was baptized without gainsaying. But our opponents would admit these kindhearted people by another way into the sheepfold, without this Christian ritual, without the cross, without tribu-

lation which abounds in holy Scripture. We therefore say, and prove by the Word of God that these are thieves and murderers, who, by their false teachings, deprive the poor souls of eternal life, for such is not in harmony with the teaching of Christ and His apostles, but after the manner of false prophets and deceptive workers whom we must shun because they preach their hearts' desire and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They strengthen the hands of the rash and say peace when there is no peace. They are therefore apostate, sectarians who shall rightfully be shunned and punished by excommunication.

(Concerning the avoidance of the excommunicated, we believe and confess that a person who has greatly fallen away, whether by a debased life or erroneous teaching, that he is secluded from God, and rightfully cut off and chastised by the church, he must be shunned and avoided according to the teaching of Christ and His apostles, without distinction, by the entire brotherhood and especially by whom it is known, in eating and drinking and similar concourse, be shunned and avoided. For Paul says: I have written you in an epistle not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world. The apostle means to say that: you may company in eating and drinking with fornicators of this world, or covetous or robbers, but if someone permits himself to be called a brother and is a fornicator, covetous, railer, drunkard, or robber, with such not to eat namely, bodily, for if the apostle had meant only spiritual eating as is the contention of our op-

ponents, then he must have consented the holy sacrament to be eaten with the fornicators of this world.)

Deliberate thoroughly upon this article with impartial minds and hearts, with heavenly and godly wisdom and understanding; then you will find that all excommunicants shall, without distinction, be shunned and avoided until the time of their repentance. We say again: without distinction, for we do not believe that it can be found in holy Scripture that some excommunicants should be punished more than others. However, if you can produce such evidence from the Word of God, then we are willing to be instructed and the case shall be won by you. But we say once more that it must be proved from the Word of God, for we will not heed any counsel of men, long-established customs, or current practices if they are not founded on the Word of God, for our faith shall be pure, undimmed, and established solely on the Word of God. This is the real counsel which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have concluded in their judgment halls of wisdom, and which the only begotten Son of God has sealed with His precious, crimson blood. To this we must look (for guidance). But if you want to look to the forefathers, then look to the confession of faith made in Holland in the town of Dortrecht, which conforms to the Word of God, then you would look to the Word of God with spiritual eyes, and with heavenly wisdom, and would not have sent such writings of stupidity to the ministers and bishops in Alsace scolding them for being so easily influ-

enced from the former order to a new one, by a man like Jacob Amman, which is contrary to the truth, that Jacob Amman wishes to introduce a new creed, for keeping house according to Christian rituals and the Word of God is my highest concern. You also said they were influenced by a man, which is wholly incorrect. Because I, Jacob Amman, have not done this without the counsel of ministers and bishops, but by counsel and on orders of the assembled ministers and bishops, and with the consent of many lay members, in the name of the entire congregation in Alsace.

And in that I went to Markirch and spoke to them concerning attendance of state churches, and asking them to confess that it was wrong; I had warned them more than once and a second time to beware of such, as Christ also warned His disciples to beware of the teachings of the Pharisees. Christ also said in John: My sheep hear my voice and they follow me, but flee from a stranger, for they know not the stranger's voice. If any one among the Israelites interviewed a strange prophet he was doomed to die. Likewise it is not becoming for us to walk to strange preachers outside the church of God, as though light could be found among darkness, or truth among lies. If one wishes to hear lies he need not attend state churches; unfortunately, they can be heard in many (other) places. Those who would not confess that this is wrong, disregarding the Word of God, appealing to their long-established dignity, and saying that they would not cease attending, I, Jacob Amman,

with judgment and counsel of ministers and bishops and in the name of the entire congregations, have expelled. Why and wherefore, then, did you say they were influenced by a man, as if I, Jacob Amman, had done this of my own accord, without counsel or foundation out of bitter jealousy? Because of the avoidance of the excommunicated, the dress question, the improvement of the beard by long hair, or on account of the burial of the dead I have expelled no one. We know that they shall bury the dead, but not attend state churches. If anyone desires to conform to this world, by trimming the beard, by wearing long hair and attractive apparel, and will not confess that it is unrighteous, he shall be justly punished; for God is not pleased with the proud. You, moreover, have accused us, and in particular me, Jacob Amman, of disciplining too strictly. Those who were submissive to the Word of God, you accused of saying too much, and advised them not to follow such strict discipline, or to practice avoidance as it had been for many years.

We are surprised at the extent of blindness and lack of discernment in such men as you are reputed to be; for if you had heavenly wisdom, and real concepts of the Word of God, you would not have given them such advice. We also understood from your disorderly writings which you had written to us with immodesty, falsehoods, insults and without any experience, but you believed lying, apostate, sectarian, and heretical spirits who are expelled according to Christian rituals, and the Word of God, and have accused us of deal-

ing too strictly, and for not yielding to appeals of patience and forbearance, which is entirely untrue; for we extended more patience and toleration than the Scriptures required of us in such cases. But those who were stubborn and would not confess the Christian faith with us, until I, Jacob Amman, with judgment and counsel of ministers and bishops was finally obliged to expel them from the communion of God, as such the like as mentioned above, even though they are ministers and bishops, for faith has no respect of persons, and the Word of God requires obedience of all people, of leaders as well as followers, of preachers as well as audiences.

You shall also know that they are such people, in particular Nicholas Moser, had he not been expelled, he should since have had to be expelled, because he twice denied the truth^s, of which he was convicted by two witnesses. All articles which we have charged against them we proved in the presence of two or three witnesses, in accord with the Word of God, and you criticized us that such methods tend much more to divide the church than to build it, and that we had gone far astray, and dealt contrary to God's command, and had not followed the principles of Christian love, which is spoken against the truth. With such awkward, insulting words you accuse and scold us without any experience. If you had heavenly wisdom and understanding, you might have inferred that inquiry should come first, then accusation and punishment be imposed later. Sirach 4.

Mark well the things which have been done

and said in Alsace and Markirch, these you have commanded not to follow too strictly, neither to practice nor heed avoidance. Us you have instructed to be reconciled with these liars, apostates, sectarians, and heretical spirits, and give ourselves captive to those who are already expelled by the Word of God, and should be shunned and avoided until the time of their repentance according to the Word of God.

You foolish Galatians, consider who has bewitched you that you will not believe the truth. We are astonished at your lack of intellect. It appears much as though you wished to gain lordship of our faith. We may rightfully accuse you of that which you have accused us, namely, that you have dealt contrary to the Word of God, in that you instruct us to be reconciled with such unbelieving people, which cannot take place until the time of their repentance. For if we would be the people of God, we must not have two separate creeds. The Apostle Paul says: "Finally, . . . be of one mind." Therefore it cannot come to pass, that those who have received the true light, Jesus Christ, devout righteousness, and the firm faith from above, and are become a worthy temple of God, shall again unite with darkness, with Belial, with unrighteousness, and again mingle with the unbelieving and be likened to them. We say: If we would do this, we may as well again walk with the world; this shall therefore not happen.

Herewith it shall also presently be announced what our innermost objectives are in these controversial items, we therefore entreat you, for God's

sake, and the benefit of your poor souls; search and examine these copied articles with impartial minds and hearts, with heavenly wisdom, and true common sense, and see if you cannot agree that we have judged according to proper rules and correct bounds of the Word of God, and either confess with us, or inform us of another and better way, from the holy Word of God, either orally or in writing, then we will accept your reproof and teaching, as is just and proper. But if you will not confess this with us, and cannot show us a better way from the Word of God, which we do not believe you can, then we will under no circumstances, submit to reproof or teaching either of you, or any unbelieving people. It is evident that you are in receipt of the first proclamation concerning avoidance in the letter you received from Alsace. In which you were informed that I, Jacob Amman, with my assistants, would not refrain therefrom, and concerning which you advised them neither to practice nor support.

For your enlightenment we have sent you another proclamation prior to this one, asking whether we had dealt justly in this controversial article, to which we request an answer. The third proclamation is in this letter, by which you may determine whether you too will confess this controversial article with us, or whether you can tell us of another way, on strength and foundation of the holy Word of God. We say: If you can do that, either orally or in writing, then we will accept your teaching and reproof, which is then just and proper, and the following judgment

shall be completely null and void, as though sentence had never been passed. We are saying this with distinct fairness and good stipulation. But if you will not confess these controversial articles of the Christian faith with us, and cannot inform us of another and better way, from the holy Scriptures, then all those in the council who agreed to the letter you wrote to the ministers and bishops in Alsace, violently denouncing avoidance, and also those in the council who agreed to the letter you sent us in Switzerland and accused us that we had shattered the church, dealt contrary to the Word of God, and had not followed Christian affections, these shall by us, and in particular by me, Jacob Amman, with judgment and counsel of the assembled ministers and bishops, be expelled, excluded, and placed under the ban as apostates and sectarians, and as unhealthy members, they shall be shunned and avoided by all members of the church of God, especially of those to whom it is known, and shall terminate all fellowship with them until the time of their repentance according to the Word of God. If there is anyone among you who does not wish to be included under this judgment it is his (or her) duty to report either in person or by writing, for the Apostle Peter says: Be prepared to give an answer to every man that asketh, but the answer shall be based on the Word of God, for we must not build on a strange foundation. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, of which Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. From Him who has called us we must not permit ourselves to be turned away to another

gospel, although there is no other, except that some who would change the Gospel of Christ, seeking to bewilder us. But if an angel came from heaven, says Paul, and preached another gospel than that we have already received, he shall be accursed. And if anyone shall add thereto, God will add to him of the plagues of the prophetic words. And if anyone shall put away from the words of the book of life, God will put away his part from the book of life, and from the holy city. This was testified by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle John in his Revelation.

This document is made and finished this twenty-second day of November, in the year 1693, in the name of many ministers and bishops, with the assembled congregation, some ministers and bishops of which have set their signatures to my small register.

The following ministers and bishops of Alsace agree to the above script: Jacob Kleiner, Jacob Kauffman, John Moyer, Peter Zimmerman, John Bachman, John Neuhauser, Phillip Haegy, Nicholas Augspurger, Henry Gerrye, Christian Plank, Valentine Kleiner, John Gerber, Ulrich Miller, Christian Steiner, Jacob Amman, Ulrich Oswalt, Ulrich Amman.

Should anyone assert that the division was according to the counsel and will of God, I shall not dispute such opinion. Let us consider, however, that the Word of God is eternal, whether it is not the ever-abiding truth, whether His will is not an everlasting Testament, and that He is a just God, and that all perfect gifts come from above, as James testified. Whether it is not given

for our correction, for reproof, whether His Word is not His will, whether He does not delight in mercy, and has come to seek that which is lost, and would not that we neglect the weightiest matters, to wit, judgment, mercy, and faith. Whosoever shall break, and teach men so, shall be called the least. But whosoever shall do and teach them, shall be called great.

The end

Jacob Amman's Warning Message (From
Christliche Gemeinde Kalender p. 146.)

Together with ministers and bishops, I, Jacob Amman, am sending this writing to everyone who is not already expelled by judgment and counsel, both men and women, ministers and lay members, to inform you that you shall appear before us on or before February 20th to answer whether you can confess these controversial articles with us, namely: to avoid those who are expelled, and that liars shall be expelled from the church, and that we shall, apart from the Word of God, beatify no one. Or if you can instruct us of a better way, from the Word of God, we will accept such instruction.

If you are unable to report by this appointed date, to confess these articles with us, or to point out to us another way from the Word of God, then we will appoint another date, namely, March 7th, on which you may present your answer. But if you fail to appear, and answer at this appointed time, then you shall according to my instruction and creed, be expelled by us ministers, and especially by me, Jacob Amman, as sectarians, and shall be shunned and avoided until the time of your repentance according to the Word of God. This paper shall be sent from one person to another to make it known to all (the brotherhood).

In the year of our Lord 1693 A.D.

A List of Reasons for Disagreement (From
Christliche Gemeinde Kalender 1915 p. 123)

A statement by us ministers and bishops of the Palatinate and Switzerland concerning the article which we, the undersigned, are unable to agree with Jacob Amman. Our reasons are, that he is introducing avoidance in natural eating and drinking, taking it from I Corinthians 5, and is not content to observe its practice in his own congregation, but all those who do not wish to confess it with him he expels from the church, and scolds them as untruthful, apostate sectarians, and heretical spirits. For this reason we can not, nor do we desire to retain him or those affiliated with him as brethren and sisters. For as we understand I Corinthians 5, we do not concede that the apostle was here referring to natural eating, but of eating the Passover (Oster-Lamm), which is Christ offered for us. He therefore says: "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven." We therefore discern that those who indulge in the vices referred to by the apostle, namely, one who permits himself to be called a brother, and is a fornicator and such as he further mentions, these shall be expelled, the evil one, and shall abstain from eating the bread of the remembrance of the body and blood of Christ with them, but shall nevertheless admonish them as brethren (II Thessalonians 3:15) and when he is once and a second time admonished and does not heed the admonition, but remains apostate and a heretic, no one should listen to or accept his complaints

(Titus 3:10) and withdraw himself from him as much as possible (II Thessalonians 3:6) and as much as serves to his edification. To this are agreed the following undersigned ministers and bishops of the Palatinate and Switzerland; written this 13th day of March, 1694 A.D., in Ohnenheim in the Mill.

Signatures of the Swiss ministers and bishops: John Reist, Peter Habegger, Ulrich Falb, Nicholas Baltzley, Peter Geiger, Dursch Rohrer, Jacob Schwartz, Daniel Grimmstettler, Ulrich Baltzley. The Palatinate ministers: Jacob Good, John Good, Peter Zolfinger, Christian Holly, Benedict Mellinger, John Henry Baer, John Rudy Nae-gley.

A Letter to John Reist (From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1908 p. 148-151)

Very friendly greetings, and the grace of God the Father, the peace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with the comfort of the Holy Spirit, together with every temporal and eternal blessing that may serve to your salvation, we are wishing you and all those who are favorably disposed toward us.

Further, dearly beloved John Reist; as we arrived in Markirch in January, 1697 (new time), to visit, comfort, and encourage our brethren, which is our Christian duty, and especially so in this sad and miserable schismatic division, since we observe that our opponents are yet continually restless, seeking to arouse disturbance by double talk, to belittle us, to slander us, and to rend the bond of love to which a small group still adheres, for which we have all the more reason to pray the Lord that He save for Himself a small party who refuse to bend their knees to Belial, or to kiss him with their lips, but hold steadfast to the doctrines of Christ and His apostles, so we may not be found as children, having immature insight, and tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, or turn from truth to fables to gain personal favour, but strive to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free (Galatians 5:1), and if we, with Christ, have died to the rudiments of the world (Colossians 2:20), let us not be caught and bound again by such, as though we were still living with the world.

In all these things we admonish and entreat earnestly, for the love of Christ, all who yet stand with us in like faith, in like love, and in like hope, to remain steadfast in the doctrines of Christ, sincerely praying Him to give us more and more perfect knowledge of His holy Word and will, that the light of truth may shine brighter for us from day to day, by which we may distinguish between the doctrines of Christ and His apostles, and those of the Antichrist and his servants, then we may quickly discern whether salvation is in avoidance or whether it is to be sought or found in the meritorious atonement of Christ. Forasmuch as this new doctrine of avoidance in natural eating and drinking has effected severe vexations in all of whom it has been adopted, for they must evidently believe that apart from this avoidance we may neither seek, or hope to find salvation; whereby the entire suffering, death, and redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ must be denied.

But now the acceptance of this avoidance has reached the point of compulsion, even though they say and write they will force it on no one, which, to say the least, is an untruth, which becomes obvious by their words and deeds. That we may prevent such apostasy from Christ, we should above all things, observe the teaching of Christ in Luke 13 concerning the fig tree which was planted in a certain man's vineyard and he said to his servant: These three years I have sought fruit on this tree and find none; cut it down. Why hindereth it the land? But the servant prayed for this fig tree and said: Lord,

let it stand yet this year until I cultivate and fertilize it. If it bears fruit, well; and if not, then cut it down. If this parable is properly construed after the mind of Christ, we can only conclude that by this new doctrine of avoidance, the true Lord of the vineyard has been cast out and another one has entered, upon whose command all who do not appeal to his proud eyes, and do not bear the fruit of this avoidance, also all branches who still adhere to the true grape vine and refuse to be frightened away, must be cut down, expelled, banished, and damned.

Where are the faithful servants of the vineyard? Who has heard of one who pledges his allegiance to this doctrine of avoidance, and has prayed for an unfruitful member, perhaps from the fear of God, or a sincere compassion or Christian disposition? But with unchristian vows and unmerciful bonds they have united against all Christian characteristics and virtues, and it is lamentable to the beloved God in heaven that also in our times has been fulfilled what the apostle said beforehand, that after his departure grievous wolves would enter who would not spare the flock, also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20:29, 30. So let us also observe his earnest teaching and admonition in which he says that by the space of three years he ceased not to warn them every one night and day, with tears. Again he says in Philippians 2: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any compassion and mercies, fulfill ye

my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:1-3). Now you can see how they have forgotten these teachings and admonitions. We should therefore determine the exact quality of the fruit of this creed, and learn to recognize the tree by its fruit, as Christ taught, and pray the dear Lord for understanding, who will gladly supply all our temporal and spiritual needs.

There are many more passages in holy Scripture from which we can perceive the essentials of the plan of salvation, but which conflict with this teaching of avoidance, and carnal reasoning, suppressing the true virtues of Christ and His members. Now my dear friend and brother, although they speak all manner of evil against us, even sparing neither lies nor deception to enlarge their party and make themselves a large following, we, however, want to hold fast to the word of truth without wavering, whereto the gracious God and Father of all mercy shall impart the spirit of truth in our hearts through Jesus Christ. Amen.

I commit you, with yours, to the beloved God and the word of His grace, who is able to strengthen, and to protect you of all evil, and to bequeath to you the inheritance of all saints. We wish you all very friendly greetings and earnestly request that you pray for us. We are also disposed to pray for you with the help of the Lord.

Written at Markirch on December 13th, 1697,
by me, John Rudy Naegley. (Undersigned by)
Christian Plien, Rudulph Huszer, Peter Lehman,
Christoffel Dollen.

A Letter to Peter Lehman and Rudolph Huszer
(From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1915 p.
121-123)

The grace of God, the peace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all who sincerely fear and serve God. Amen.

Further, dear brethren: Peter Lehman and Rudolph Huszer, from your letter we understood that we should come to you, and I think we will. But personally, I dare not undertake it, due to bodily infirmities. I cannot very well, however, omit to write you that the others (the Amish party) wish to unite with us again, which I consider a serious situation, since I have not heard that they are penitent of having expelled and banished many pious persons, of whom they knew no sin or offence, as unhealthy members of the body of Christ, and as apostates and sectarians. If they have done right in this, then we are at fault; but if we are innocent of which they have accused us, and in a clear conscience I see no guilt in us, then to accept them again, under such circumstances, is hard for me to bear; unless they make known a deep remorse and repentance. If such contrition is not manifest in them, then my advice is that we remain calm, and conduct ourselves as we were taught from the Word of God, by our predecessors, concerning which is found in Menno Simons' book, but in the Upper countries and in Switzerland we find none of it (avoidance), that some of our bishops, as Marti

Meili, Rudi Hägi, and Rudi Egli (see page 10 of part 3 in *Ausbund Sangbuch*), personally spoke hard against avoidance to me, and said we should abide by the Old Order and adopt nothing new.

The Groninger write that where there is no avoidance the church becomes filled with spots and wrinkles. The Swiss brethren have never used outward avoidance, and have maintained peace and harmony, also kept the church in restraint and order, that I would desire nothing better than that God might give us grace that we could preserve ourselves and the church in such peace and prosperity, instead of so disunited, differing, and disputant, that an old minister who has often sojourned in Holland and is well known there, told me; that if he were to be driven to Holland he would rather dwell in a (German) village and see how he might earn his board.

During the war many of our families in the Palatinate migrated to Holland, Holstein, and Groningen, these were obliged to divide themselves. I have a son-in-law who lived there five years and did not join either side. He did not partake of the sacrament because the church in Holland is so confused. How then shall we know to which group to submit and promise to accept their orders?

There are many Mennonites who are skilled and clever at disputation; if they were so wise in promoting peace, they could do Holland much good. And concerning our controversy; the Alsatians, and Frisians, and our Old High Germans

have been agreed for a hundred years to forebear one another in love, with these articles. The Old Flamingers recognized it, provided it were unanimously understood, as did also our bishops who ordained me to the ministry, and I hope to abide by their accepted creed. As far as outward avoidance is concerned, I can submit to unanimous agreement, but I cannot adhere to one who excludes and banishes another, and also do not advise brethren in other countries to do so. It is my desire to abide by my original confession, as I have accepted it, with many others, and whosoever wishes to abide therein with me, shall be my brethren and sisters. But as for those who, for the sake of avoidance, cannot keep us for brethren and sisters, it is my advice that we remain quiet, neither scolding nor extolling them, and also abstain from despising them or disputing with them. What I cannot confess to correspond with the Word of God, I cannot recommend to another; for everyone must give account of himself to God, before the judgment seat of Christ.

Closing herewith, you are all sincerely greeted by us ministers and bishops, and committed to the protection of the grace of God. The merciful Father keep us and all pious in His love, and help us to all virtues, and what we request in your prayers we are also minded to do for you.

From me, Jacob Good, with all ministers and bishops of the church of Jesus Christ in the Upper Palatinate. Written on October 19th, 1699. (Later endorsed by:) Rudolph Huszer Peter Lehman, Christoffel Dollem, John Meier

Christian Neudammt, John Rudy Naegley, Rud-
ulph Blatschen; and of Switzerland: Peter Hab-
egger, Peter Geiger, John Burkey.

A Letter by Peter Lehman and Rudulph Huszer
(From *Eine Verantwortung* pp. 36, 37.)

We brethren in Mannheim greet you in friendliness, and wish you the peace and grace of God, the heavenly Father, and the love of His Son, together with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you and us all. Amen. We request that you pray the beloved God, that He may keep us in the truth, and we are minded to do likewise for you, as much as God gives us grace.

We further inform you that Jacob Amman has summoned us to the Walkmutterhouse, wanting to hear the letters I had carried to Switzerland. When we appeared he requested that I read the letters to him; so I read the one by Jacob Good first. Then he commenced speaking irreverently and called me a liar; that I had carried lying letters to Switzerland and had followed the churches and read the letters to them, and had estranged his people from him: that by a man he had warned me to leave off, or he would take hold of the affair; we are not in Switzerland now, and said further that he was warning us once more, and if we would not cease doing so, he would do something else about the matter.

Rudulph Huszer and I told him we were not alarmed, and would not forsake our ministry. He said we are false teachers, banished, lying men, the devil's servants. I said I had not yet perceived the false teachings. He said we deny avoidance. I said we want to avoid you; you deserve to be avoided. He said he had no desire

to observe it (communion) with us; if he had one hair on his head that had a desire, he would pluck it out. It can well be perceived that he does not strive to follow peace and holiness. Hebrews 12:14. He thus convicts himself, with his adherents. We know trees by their fruits, as Christ said in Matthew 7:10, 20. Paul said: "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Titus 3:10, 11).

Jacob Amman requested that I read the other (Jonas Lohr) letter to him also. Then I commenced reading, and when I came to the paragraph which reads, "Prove to me where Christ or His disciples used or commanded to use such avoidance in natural eating and drinking. . . . I repeat, prove it; which you cannot do. . . . Therefore leave those churches at peace who are likeminded with us," then a quarrel began as fire entering straw, with scolding and scorning, the like of which I had never heard. He often said: "Shame on you, you grayheads, you liars and excommunicants." He not only scolded us, but our bishops in the Lower and Upper countries he also scolded as liars. And the Hollanders as being blind because they have avoidance in the confession book, but in their letters it is otherwise.

The legal claim to the church house was also disputed. He said the house belongs to them; that those who had purchased it have the faith with him. Rudolph Huszer told him this was untrue, whereupon the argument ensued with

scolding and contempt. I cannot express with writing how he scolded us as lying grayheads, who should be ashamed to pastorate a congregation.

We told him we would not accept this; that he is a blasphemer, and that he would not be the judge at the Last Day, but must await his verdict. Thus we parted. After the flesh we were sad; but in the Spirit and in Hope we were joyous, committing it to God. We counseled the appointment of a day of fasting and prayer, to call on the beloved God to gracefully protect us within His shelter. Be greeted in friendliness and well commended to God. Written December 27th, 1697.

Peter Lehman
Rudulph Huszer

A Letter by Gerhart Roosen of Hamburg (Germany). (From *Begebenheit* P. 21-25.)

(Note: The author of this letter is mentioned on pages 43 and 92 of "Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine" by John C. Wenger. He was a man of unusual vitality. A footnote in the *Gemeinde Kalender* states that at the age of eighty-five he traveled far into Friesland [likely afoot], a distance of a hundred and twenty miles. He died an accidental death at the age of ninety-nine years eight months, fifteen days.)

December 21, 1697

Beloved friends in Alsace, and brethren in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We wish you much grace and mercy, peace and comfort of God; through Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with and in you, and above all sanctification and beatitude in the present and eternal life. Amen.

Dearly beloved friends: With my meditations I have often been with you during this wearisome war (French conquest of Louis XIV) and have worried about your situation, for it must be difficult to maintain stability when one is obliged to flee here, and another there; which may eventually result in complete scatterment. For this reason, I have for some time wished for an opportunity to write you a letter, but did not know how I might get it to you, for in the past year, I sent several letters to the Palatinate but had no response. Now today, I received a letter from

Christian Blum, in which he mentions the reasons for your reminiscence of me, and the consideration of gratitude given me at your conference.

I have thus been attracted by an intrinsic affection, also with my letter will visit you again, although it cannot occur bodily, due to old age, the distance, and the dangers involved. Wherein I may well say with the Apostle Paul: For though I am absent in the flesh, yet in the spirit I am present with you, through our common faith (Colossians 2:5), and it is painful for me to hear of your oppression, while we are living undisturbed in both temporal and spiritual peace. In the temporal, I hope you may soon have peace, providing it is not brought about by the so-called Christian persecution. (Note: This term "Christian persecution" is not used here in the usual sense. The "oppression" referred to above has to do with the French dragonnades, who were quartered in the homes of Protestants, and were free to disrupt family life by disgrace and insult of the womanhood of their hosts; such disorders being sanctioned by rulers who posed as dignitaries of the Roman Church, and urged as a means of converting them to their ecclesiastical system. It denotes an oppression conducted by Christians; hence the term, "so-called Christian persecution.") I am concerned over the annexation of Strassburg and Alsace (former German city and province) to France; here remains the admonition of the Lord Christ to follow Him with patience. Matthew 10.

I am sincerely grieved that you have been so disturbed by those who think highly of themselves, and make laws of things which are not upheld in the Gospel. Had it been specified in the apostolic letters how or wherewith a believer should be clothed, or whether he should go in this or that country and this were disobeyed, then these had something of which to speak; but it is more contrary to the Gospel to affix one's conscience to a pattern of the hats, clothes, stockings, shoes, or the hair of the head (Colossians 2:14-18), or make a distinction in which country one lives; and then, for one to undertake the enforcement of such regulations by punishing with the ban, all who will not accept them, and to expel from the church, as a leaven; those who do not wish to avoid those thus punished, though neither the Lord Jesus in His Gospel or His holy apostles have bound us to external things, nor have deemed it expedient to provide such regulations and laws. I agree with what the Apostle Paul says in Colossians 2 (verse 16), that the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God, is not obtained "in meat, or in drink," nor in this or that, in the form or pattern of clothing; to which external things our dear Saviour does not oblige us.

Wherefore then does our friend, Jacob Amman, undertake to make laws of such things for the people, and to expel from the church, those who will not obey him? If he considers himself a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and advocates a literal administration of the law, then he must not wear two coats, nor carry money in

his purse, or shoes on his feet. Matthew 10:10. If he does not adhere to the letter of his Lord, how dare he insist on obedience from his fellow men, in regulations he has not received from his lawmaker? Oh, that he might do as the Apostle Paul has done, in the fear of the Lord; showing meekness to all men. Titus 3:2. The apostle's advice is: that the "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (Romans 15:1-7).

In all of Paul's letters we do not find one word in which he has given believers regulations concerning the forms of clothing they should have, but in all things he instructed them to "condescend to men of low estate" (Romans 12:16) according to all decency and modesty. (See I Timothy 2:19.) I hold that it is becoming to adapt the manner of dress to the current customs of one's environments; but it is reasonable that we abstain from luxuries, pride, and carnal worldly lusts (I John 2, verses 16, 17), not immediately adopting the latest styles of fashionable clothing; which is certainly something to be re-proved, but when it has come into common usage then it is honorable to follow in such common apparel, and to walk in humility. But, thanks be to God, I do not want showy array or worldly lusts, and have always continued wearing nearly the same pattern of clothes; but if I had dressed in modern fashion, should I then, for this reason, be excommunicated? This would be an injustice, and contrary to the Scriptures. The Lord has, indeed, made regulations in the church of God, for punishment of the contentious, and those conducting themselves contrary to the

ordinances of God, as set forth in the Gospel. Herein it must be determined whether the things we wish to bind are also bound there, or are commanded to be bound.

The Holy Scriptures must be our ruling standard; to this we must yield, not running before it, but following, and that not untimely, but with care, fear, and regret; for it is a dangerous venture to step into the judgment of God and bind that which is not bound in heaven.

So much written in love and truth for your service and instruction in things worth while. I can hardly leave off writing to you. The beloved heavenly Father and God of consolation sustain and strengthen you in all oppressions, and bless you in body and soul, to His honor and to your salvation. Amen. From me, your brother, Gerhart Roosen of Hamburg.

A Letter by Peter Geiger (From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1908 p. 142-145.)

When I, Peter Geiger, first heard of avoidance, I had not yet been confined to prison in the community of Bern, and I was concerned about this particular article when those of the Upper community mentioned it. First of all, Jacob Amman resolved to hold communion services twice a year. Then there was a meeting concerning this; and Benjamin Schneider and John Reist asserted that if one is worthy, and can prepare himself, then twice is not too often; on the other hand, if he is deserving, then once is enough, and that the High Priest entered the sanctuary but once a year, but if ours no longer desire it that way they would allow them to observe it thus, but they did not abide therein, and introduced other changes.

In this John Reist had a disturbance in the church and called on Nicholas Moser, and me, Peter Geiger, for assistance. When Jacob Amman heard about this, he requested that we ask John Reist concerning his position on avoidance. To this John Reist answered: "That which enters the mouth does not defile a man, but that which proceeds from the mouth." After this, Jacob Amman, Ulrich Amman, Christian Plank, and Nicholas Augspurger went to Claus Moser and told him they wanted to go to Bern and speak with John Reist. Thereupon Claus Moser instructed them to consult Benjamin Schneider first, as he is the bishop. They did not go to him, however, but close to me, Peter Geiger, hardly more than a quarter hour's distance, they ar-

ranged a church meeting, but did not tell me until after I had gone to sleep. Then came a messenger saying, Arise; and I went with him, and the meeting was already well under way. There were people present, that, had I known it, I should not have gone. But after the meeting was closed, Jacob and Ulrich Amman, Christian Plank, Nicholas Augspurger, Michael Blasen, Christian Gouman, and I, Peter Geiger, with several others more, went into a small room, and after hearing their discussion, we voiced agreement. Christian Plank and I said we had felt for some time that the matter should have consideration. When they came to John Reist he would not comply; neither would Peter Swartzentruber, Peter Gul, and Jacob Moos. Then Jacob Amman sent a message to the ministers and bishops to meet at Claus Moser's barn.

Claus Moser, Peter Swartzentruber, and Peter Gul then inquired of us whether we would consider to accept avoidance; whereupon I, Peter Geiger, replied that I could only suggest that we call a conference of the bishops of Switzerland, and search the Word of God, and then I would comply to whichever is nearest in accord with the Gospel. Then Claus Moser and the other brethren urgently insisted on this resolution, and Jacob Amman consented, and said in eight days. I suggested in three weeks, but he said that was much too long. Then Claus Moser said in fourteen days; so we settled on this date, and sent invitations. After fourteen days, appeared Claus Moser, Peter Swartzentruber, John Miller, Jacob Amman, and his ministers at half past eight.

It was then very obvious to me, Peter Geiger, that the brethren were exceedingly sad. Then I mentioned to Jacob Amman the passage, "That which enters the mouth does not defile the man, but that which proceeds from the mouth." He then replied that had nothing to do with the issue, and beckoned with his hand. We then said, Whosoever eats, judge not another who eats. He again motioned with his hand, and said it had nothing to do with the issue. We then said, If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another; among yourselves take heed, dear brethren.

We then pleaded with Jacob Amman, that for God's sake he should not bring about a division; in our opinion this would be much to your discredit. Jacob Amman then said, We will not move about evermore. I have no desire to cause a schism, but we are sorry the other brethren are not here. Here are three sisters; we will send one to see what is wrong. Shortly after that, one or two brethren brought word that they could not come because it was harvesttime and a busy season. Thereupon Jacob Amman began by saying, That is the way they carry on; foolish as they are, they cannot be induced to come. And said further; John Reist is a rabble-rouser and has scolded and scorned the Word of God. Then he pulled out a letter on which were written six charges against John Reist. After having read these, Jacob Amman pronounced him expelled and banished from the Christian Church. We were fairly horrified that the meeting was not conducted in an orderly manner. Claus Moser

said, Be patient, I have a heavy burden as well as you. I have not counseled with my congregation, and I can not promise for the others. Amman then said: You might have counseled with them, and once more he asked me whether I would confess, and I, Peter Geiger, replied: This time I will not give you an answer, for I have told you I had no other advice than to call the bishops together, and they are not all here. Jacob Amman then said: Therefore they shall be expelled and banished as liars. Then he asked Peter Habegger and Jacob Swartzentruber and Peter Gul whether they wished to confess avoidance with him. When they objected, he expelled them from the church. Then Peter Zimmerman said: There you have it. And they passed out the door without shaking hands. There are several sisters and one brother who have not been expelled and banished. It is around noon, or shortly thereafter, and several more brethren have come over and have arranged a meeting and have forbidden that anyone should tell us about it. Is that according to love, dear brethren? Think it over seriously.

Some time after these events had occurred, a number of brethren who had not been expelled, assembled and counseled concerning the situation, but Claus Moser and I, Peter Geiger, preferred to remain inactive and silent; then we retired from the room and they counseled among themselves, and when they called us again we went in to them, and they ordained us again to the ministry: we should resume comforting and exhorting the people. Jacob Amman, then, sent

two of his ministers to Benjamin Schneider and John Miller to ask them whether they would confess avoidance. When they objected, he sent them a letter with this statement: "I, Jacob Amman, with ministers and bishops, of whom there are twelve; it is our resolution, and this in accordance with the Word of God; that Benjamin Schneider and John Miller, who would not confess the faith with us, shall be expelled and banished from the Christian Church and communion of God, as sectarians." We then wrote them a note asking whether they might confess that they had gone too far with berating and banishment, and this notice was served three times, whereupon they replied: "If you will not confess avoidance we will have nothing to do with you." A messenger was then sent about the community, and when he returned, several men interviewed Jacob Amman, but he would not yield. Then John Zook and I, Peter Geiger, went to Jacob and Ulrich Amman and offered that we would arrange a meeting to which we would admit the brotherhood of both sides. Jacob Amman then said he does not want to start a fresh dispute with us. I, Peter Geiger, then pleaded with him three times to yield for God's sake, but he refused to come. Afterward he sent a note, saying they would come; but they brought no lay members with them. We, however, admitted the congregation. It was then agreed that while one was speaking the others should remain attentive, and listen to him. Jacob then spoke and the audience heard him. But when I, Peter Geiger, wanted to speak, he refused to wait, and arose and wanted

to leave, and I caught him by the shirt sleeve, saying, Let me present my word also; but he jerked his arm away, and left the room.

A LETTER BY ULRICH AMMAN

(From *Begebenheit* 1936 p. 26-57)

To all our fellow members; also imprisoned brothers and sisters who do not sit confined as thieves and murderers, offenders or covetous, but are despised and slandered for the sake of a simple spiritual faith. One need not be ashamed to suffer as a true Christian who lives according to the Word of God, but may glorify God therein, for the time has come for judgment to commence in the house of God. But if it commences there, what then will be the end of unbelievers? For believers are at this time called unto suffering. They also have the comforting promise of the Lord that they are blessed if they suffer and are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But if the kingdom of heaven is to be possessed, then it must be entered by them both, for Christ also must suffer and enter His glory. The Apostle Paul said to his believers, "For you yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily when we were with you we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as is come to pass and ye know." But to comfort them he again said, "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us" (II Thessalonians 1:6, 7). We are wishing you victory to obtain this promised glory, and fight together with us, and with sufficient patience to overcome through the power

of Christ, this together with brotherly greetings and a request that you remember us in your prayers before the Lord.

Further, I received a letter on March 18th which had already been written on December 30th of the past year. It did not say who wrote it, but I believe it was written by Brother Nicholas Bacher, and I understood that you were perplexed and did not know which side was right or wrong, and that you wished to know the reasons for the division and concerning the meeting at which a reconciliation failed to materialize because we refused to accept the terms of peace offered us. I am sad and burdened that I shall review such a long, wearisome controversy in writing. I had desired to discuss these things as little as possible, for by speaking of it we must again irritate the old wounds and mention the errors, which I do not so well like to do against the other party, as I understand that they are doing, and have been doing against us. But if it is considered necessary to discuss it for the honor of God, and the salvation of men, then with the spirit of truth we shall go the straight way unreservedly, and present the whole case without partiality, not with a view to slander or belittle one's fellow men, carelessly exaggerating; and trying to spare oneself by concealing his own faults: for beyond all doubt, there have been errors on both sides, of which each must bear his own burdens and be reconciled to the brother whom he has offended. Since you request an account of this case I would much prefer to inform you orally, and show you with Scriptures,

which I cannot do so well in this writing, yet the following must serve as an answer.

There were three articles which provoked the controversy: first; we were given occasion to ask them whether they could confess a spiritual and natural avoidance of the expelled with us. At that time it had not yet been commanded how high or how deep the avoidance should be observed. Then some would not confess a natural and spiritual avoidance with us, but opposed it firmly, and in particular John Reist spoke hard against it, and he was an eminent man of considerable influence at that time. He then sent a letter out among the ministers stating that he would not adopt such regulation of avoiding the expelled in natural and spiritual eating, and asked them to consider whether John Reist had assumed the proper course of action. Several who had confessed avoidance with us at the first inquiry, and said there was sufficient Scripture for it, and had practiced avoidance themselves, but when they saw that John Reist and others more would not confess avoidance, but opposed it firmly, they retracted their confessions and opposed it with the others, even though they had practiced it themselves.

Second; it so happened that a woman who was supposed to have been a sister in the church had spoken falsehoods, and when she was questioned concerning this, she denied that she had said it, but when there was enough evidence she owned up to her untruth. This matter was brought to John Reist, who twice ruled that this woman should remain a sister in the church. This and

other incidents have given us reasons to ask them to confess with us that those who openly and intentionally speak lies, and finally admit such falsehoods because of evidence, shall be expelled from the church. They did not wish to admit this to us; finally, however, we were well convinced that they saw it alike with us; yet, in my opinion, because of bitterness toward us, and natural love toward her they refused to confess it, but severely resisted.

Third; many occasions were presented which gave us reasons to ask them to confess with us that outside the Word of God, no one should beatify the kindhearted people. Those who yet adhere to worldly ordinances, and are obedient to their regulations, even though they bestow many helpful deeds to the pious, which is of course a good means of finding the right way by the mercies of God; but for the sake of assistance or deeds of mercy to the pious they are not to be beatified, and also not condemned, but should be praised as the Scriptures say of Cornelius, who prayed much and gave alms, which is a good example of entering a Christian experience. But they would not confess this with us, and on their side with abuses of the Scriptures they opposed it vigorously.

In friendliness and instruction from the holy Scriptures we requested the confession of these articles, in particular of bishops and ministers, a first, a second, and a third time, and of some much more often, or that they instruct us of a better way, by guidance of the holy Scripture. But our requests were in vain, and even when it

could be seen that one or another was in agreement with us, yet because of grudge they would not confess it. In my opinion this was at least not the cause of their grudge; for at that time things were not going too well in the church, and when sin was being earnestly reprov'd, refusing to look through the fingers in all things, which, of many also was accepted as good, but of many others who preferred to go the broad way, and in particular by ministers who should have reprov'd unrighteousness, but until now have remained lukewarm, and have considered us, especially Jacob Amman, as being harsh.

Because these specified articles were not confessed by the ministers who would not be moved by many admonitions and instructions from the holy Scriptures, we considered this as a great sin and error on their part, and with consent or counsel of ministers who were in agreement, but without counsel of the church, brotherhood and sisters, we expelled them from the church. And we have done this only for the best interest, for the chastisement and humiliation of the sinner and the purification of the church. But we have not assumed the best motive in that we have done this without the counsel of the church and brotherhood; it was the custom, however, of many at that time while we were yet one, to judge such disciplinary matters by ministers, without the counsel of the brotherhood. And it may be that on their side it is still the custom, at any rate it was not better understood at the time; we therefore have failed to secure the best effects, and they would not accept the chastisement but con-

tinued with their ministry, without heeding the punishment, and sent out messengers among the membership day and night, and went about themselves complaining how we had dealt so rashly with them and had laid an unjust ban on them, and that if we should try to approach them, they should not receive us, and as concerns the afore-mentioned articles; they instructed many brothers and sisters to their side, which has induced them to evade us. When we came and wanted to speak with them, they hid themselves from us; those who had formerly been kind to us.

In this manner the hearts of many people have been estranged from us, and has given reasons for the division. And when they would not receive us, but trusted the word of the punished men and adhered to them, then we did not know better at that time than to send them a message and appoint them two different dates, at which we requested that they appear before us to answer whether they would confess the articles with us which we had requested of the ministers, or could instruct us in something better with the Word of the Lord, then we would recant. And that if they would not appear at the first appointed time, that they should appear on the later date. But when they did not appear, and adhered to the punished men, they were expelled from the church by counsel of the ministers, but without counsel of the brotherhood. But they have submitted as the ministers, and have together carried on among themselves, which has in such manner developed into a schism. It was the consequence of avoidance and other serious

matters which are too numerous to recall; also concerning several ministers in the Palatinate.

And thus they have heeded neither our complaint nor chastisement, and have proceeded as a tranquil people. They have more and more resisted the requested articles, claiming we had introduced new things, teachings of men, commandments of men, and said, avoidance was a spoon-serving, a spoon-avoidance, (dishing out punishment, by the spoonful) and other unseasoned words more, until avoidance was finally considered by some as a creed and law.

We contended from the beginning, and steadfastly believe that the afore-mentioned articles which we asked them to confess, conform to the Word of the Lord, and as far as I know, we are therein still unchanged, although on their side they have resisted it with despising words, and those people who have scant knowledge in the matter, and should have been instructed and encouraged therein, they have to the contrary advised to dismiss it, and to turn away from it, and have gathered them to their side and to their avoidance. With this they have given us reason to speak and write to them that they were apostates and sectarians. The apostle said in Titus 3: "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject."

From these words we had understood, and understand it yet, that if anyone in the church teaches unsound doctrines; to wit, doctrines which do not conform to the true doctrines of Christ and His apostles, and cause the people to err, he shall be admonished once and a second

time, and if he does not repent he shall be punished and avoided. I say punished; because without punishment, avoidance cannot well be used. With this in mind, we have done this to them also, but I sincerely believe that we too have not followed the proper course of action, which we have often acknowledged to them. About seven or eight month later (after sending out a warning message to the brotherhood) a conference was called in Alsace, at which both sides assembled from Switzerland, the Palatinate, and Alsace to see if we could make peace. Then we on our side asked them to confess the afore-mentioned articles with us. There were ten men present from Switzerland, nine of whom were ministers, and among all these not one confessed a single article with us, even though those from the Palatinate confessed with us concerning the kindhearted and liars, so that we could have been satisfied with them in these two articles, but we could not agree on avoidance, and besides there were other matters. The next day the seven from the Palatinate, and the afore-mentioned ten of their side from Switzerland were again assembled. We on our side were not present.

Then those from the Palatinate addressed the Swiss, saying that if they would not confess the two articles of the kindhearted and liars, they could be no more satisfied than is Jacob Amman. Thereupon the Swiss confessed both articles immediately, and they concluded an agreement and passed judgment upon us, and wrote a letter containing the following: "A statement by us ministers and bishops of the Palatinate concerning the

articles which we are unable to agree with Jacob Amman. Our reasons are that he is introducing avoidance in natural eating and drinking, taking it from I Corinthians 5, and is not content to observe such practice in his own congregation, but all those who do not wish to confess it with him he expels from the church, and scolds them as untruthful, apostate sectarians, and heretical spirits. For this reason we cannot, and do not desire to retain him or those affiliated with him as brethren and sisters."

Such are the words of their letter. It is undersigned by the names of the Palatinate and Swiss ministers, but unfortunately there is too much written, for it will not be found that they were all expelled whose names were mentioned, but several have also given reasons thereto. Their writing says all; Brother Nicholas, consider well this sentence, for what reason Jacob Amman and *all* those affiliated with him have been cut off from the brotherhood. They have given him reasons to introduce avoidance, and to not be content to observe it himself, but also expel others who would not confess it with him. In their writing is indicated as though Jacob Amman had expelled others about avoidance alone, and they have kept silent about the other two articles. In this they have not taken the best course.

If Jacob Amman lawfully introduced avoidance, and desires to abide thereby, as he rightly should abide unto death, which appears here reasonable enough, and may well conform to the fundament of the Word of the Lord, was it then not altogether unreasonable to cut Jacob Amman

and all these brothers and sisters off from the brotherhood without giving them a single warning or admonition either orally or in writing? They have also passed judgment upon us without counsel of the church and brotherhood, likewise as we had formerly done to them. Suppose the afore-mentioned articles even had no foundation in the Word of the Lord; of which I carry no doubt; and Jacob Amman had unreasonably demanded them, and had expelled from the church those who would not confess, and therefore Jacob Amman and all who labored with him but had not agreed to our judgment, because we did this without their counsel, and they were therefore innocent, but were nevertheless cut off from the brotherhood without any admonition.

Examine these negotiations and see if they agree with the Word of the Lord. Two of these afore-mentioned Palatinate ministers who were involved in this deal have afterward also examined it; and with great regret, seen and confessed what they had helped conclude, and have expelled themselves from the church, and afterward affiliated with us. The name of one is John Good, who is still living. Christian Holly is dead. After they had affiliated with us, then those on the other side said, they have placed themselves under the verdict they themselves helped to make; that Jacob Amman's position dispelled him from the brotherhood.

You can imagine what a well-rhyming affair this has been; that those upon whom this judgment was passed, should at least have discontinued their ministry, and submitted to the decision

of ministers who were not involved in the controversy, and who adhered to neither side. These might have deliberated whether the punishment was just or unjust, then the people had remained undivided, for on our side we often told them that we did not want to cause a division, but only utilize chastisement; they did not do this, but continued steadfastly, and have passed a counter-judgment upon us, and upon the brotherhood, who had no fault therein.

Besides they used many words concerning us, for which they themselves must answer; having said; they consider our chastisement as though a Catholic monk had chastised them; that Jacob is a scolder and condemns everything; that we had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and that peace with us was impossible; that Jacob is beyond the grace of God; that he is the rider with the sword, who takes peace from the earth; that he is the star fallen from heaven which made the waters bitter; that Jacob was the incarnation of Satan; that he was the Diotrephes of the third Epistle of John, of which Paul mentions in Acts 20.

Some of these words I have heard myself and I will leave it to them and the Lord. It was urged by both sides that the disrupted peace should be restored. We had also hoped we could become agreed in our faith; which I can say with a clear conscience to the aching of my heart, and for this cause many meetings were held in the Palatinate, in Alsace, and in Switzerland, but each time when we thought there might be a large conference, and that the brotherhood of their side,

who were most concerned for peace, should be there also, but each time were prevented of coming. They were permitted to come before us very sparingly, but many ministers came who were little concerned about peace. It was the intent on our side that we first become united in the creed, for lack of which the controversy had started, but when we talked to them about beliefs, then they referred us to our faults; that if they even had confessed the faith with us, we had dealt such and such injustice to them; and accused us of having gone too far in judging, and in the words we had called them as is already mentioned above.

We highly entreated them, they should not allow the confession of the requested articles to hinder them, if we could agree on a belief; that we do not wish to stand in their way with our offences, for on our side we believe, and the longer, the better we can see that we have also erred, and have not followed the best course. On our side we offered them, that if we could become agreed in matters of belief, then our past records shall be investigated on both their side and our side by the entire brotherhood, and for all the errors that are found on our side, we will gladly and willingly submit to chastisement, and they shall do likewise, whereby we can again become one people; for with our errors we do not wish to stand in the way of anyone.

But this was all in vain. Our labors had no consideration with them. When they spoke of the affair they commenced with our errors, but would not acknowledge to having erred themselves, or

of having given reasons for our errors; and from thenceforth there was wrangling and a division among the people. This was considered serious by our side, to think that it may become permanent, and on our side we assembled to see how we could best improve the situation, and how the schism might again be healed. And as to what we may have erred on our side, we believed, and believe it yet, that we had requested lawful articles of them, which was the truth; but that when they would not confess them with us, that we then expelled them according to the old custom, as stated above, without counsel of the church and brotherhood, we believe to have erred, and have also believed and confessed that we may have been too rash, because of the fact that what we had requested of them were matters of faith and things pertaining to the holy Scriptures; and since true wisdom and discernment of the holy Scriptures are secret gifts of God, which no person can give to another, we had extended patience, carrying them longer without chastisement, and instructing them in the Word of the Lord, hoping they might better themselves.

It should not be understood by anyone, however, that we had thought, nor do we think yet, that no reason for punishment was present. We have carried them by special forbearance, hoping one or another might make a change. We have also believed and confessed that in speaking and writing we have not produced the desired effects; in that we called them liars, quarrelsome, apostates, and heretical spirits, even though they gave us reasons to call them liars. Those who con-

fessed the requested articles with us in the beginning and before this controversy started, when the government of Bern demanded to know the creed of our faith, and we, on orders of these authorities produced a printed copy of our Confession of Faith, which was compiled at Dortrecht, Holland, by so many nations; and from there down to Switzerland was adopted in good faith as being Scriptural, by us all; and has been the creed of our common faith in Switzerland; and since avoidance of the expelled is confessed therein, we did not know other than that it were authentic; but after these men saw that John Reist and others disagreed with us in this article they retracted their confession and resisted like the others.

Consider, brother, whether this has not given us reasons to call them liars. One brother was expelled from the church for the truth's sake. They have nevertheless retained him as a brother, because he refused to confess the article, but has firmly resisted, and has told many people about it, both within the church and outside of the church, and has induced them to shy away and shun it, and have swayed public opinion to see it their way, which has given us reasons to call them apostates and heretics. Although such reasons were given us, but since these names are not properly understood by many people, and effect more offence and hindrance to them than benefit, we have admitted and believed it may have been better to spare these, and use words that are more moderate.

We then became agreed on our side to revoke the excommunications of the other side for a period of time; not that we thought there was no reason of punishment on their side, but because we had executed it without counsel of the church and brotherhood, and that we may have been a bit too rash, and had not better understood it at the time. For such things shall not be done by hatefulness and grudge. We then excommunicated ourselves, which no one else wished to do to us, and this for the atonement for the errors committed against those on the other side, orally and in writing; requesting Christian patience of them, and they also accepted our confessions.

When this happened, those on the other side became exceedingly jubilant, and as one says, shouted from the housetops, saying: Now you can see who was right and who was wrong; and supposed they were free of errors, and that the cause of the controversy was all found on our side, although these poor people should have been humiliated by the step which we ourselves had taken, and which no one wished to do to us, and justly should have taken a warning to enter their inner selves and contemplate that which they also had done to us, and removed the obstacles which were not small, and prepared a straight path for our reunion; for we have not accepted chastisement for their errors, but for our own; and the errors they committed have nevertheless remained.

They may now see for themselves how they atone for their sin. After we had stood without the communion for a period of time, and then

desired to be accepted into fellowship again, we sent men to them in the Upper and Lower provinces, asking them whether they could be satisfied with us, that we might be reinstated, and that they should have patience and forbearance with us, which we cordially asked of them. They then took counsel and sent us word and letters stating that concerning the occurrences of the controversy they are content and will gladly pardon us, so we may be reinstated, and expected we would be reinstated by them. Then we replied: Yes, we too will be content; provided they confess the articles with us, and make restitution for the errors on their side, removing the obstructions which are a hindrance to us, then we would be well satisfied to be reinstated by them. And there, alas! the negotiations unfortunately crumbled, and our requests were all in vain.

Then we were reinstated by ministers who were not involved in the controversy. Many meetings were then held in an effort to reconcile them, and it gradually became apparent that we were agreed on the articles, excepting avoidance, but in this they were of very unlike opinion. One confessed more, the other less, the third confessed none of it; namely, physical avoidance.

When they saw, however, that an agreement on the articles might be concluded, for some asserted we had been reformed; they then brought up the article of feet washing, so as to always pretend we were not in one faith and would not be obliged to confess the errors, and therefore said they would not confess physical feet washing, and said further that if we desired to harp on

their errors we need not expect to become reconciled. That they would not heed our admonitions became very obvious when we came to them, pleading heartily for peace, and by sincere love and Christian guidance have pointed out their errors, and urged them to take an interest in peace, and clear the way of obstacles. From then on they formed a habit of repeatedly telling us that they on their side were reposed, and if we on our side are restless we should return to the fold from whence we have come.

This is the solution which they have offered us not only once, but many times as the sole means of securing peace, and which we have not yet been able to accept; not from hatefulness or grudge, but out of fear of our God; for it is distressful for all peace-loving people, to be a brother among persons with whom he cannot agree on Scriptural articles of belief, or with their sins which have been disclosed by love and Christian guidance, when they flee into lurking-holes, not wanting to confess, or offer to submit to chastisement. Whoever wants peace with them shall keep silent.

Oh, this is a heavy burden to bear, and we consider it an injustice that they refused to confess the article in the start, which we on our side still confess, and remain unchanged, but which they on their side have strongly spoken against. We consider this a sin and injustice of them; for in our opinion they have resisted the Word of the Lord, and have induced many people to shy away from it, instructing them otherwise, which has resulted in discord and division.

We consider it an injustice of them, that when they were chastised they disregarded the punishment, and have at least not discontinued their ministry, and submitted to the investigation of others, but have continued persistently and have completely divided the people. We consider it an injustice of them, that when they were in Alsace, they passed a counterjudgment upon us all. We consider it an injustice of them, that they passed this judgment without counsel of the church and brotherhood. We consider it an injustice of them, that they passed this judgment upon the brotherhood without any previous warning. To my knowledge, our judgment has been passed upon no one without two, three, or multiple warnings, and we have confessed that even this may have been too rash. But whether the sentence they have passed can stand before the Word of the Lord, the pious may determine with the Word of the Lord. And the many unbecoming words used concerning us, as stated above, we consider an injustice of them. And now they even resist the article of physical feet washing, which we consider an injustice of them.

Our mistakes against them and God, we have confessed; and they have accepted our confession, for which I am exceedingly glad; and we have considered this our duty. They are of the opinion, however, they had made no mistakes, and are therefore not obliged to confess errors. After we had confessed our mistakes, in the hope of being reconciled to God and men, and as stated above, they had given us word and letters acknowledging their contentment, but later again accused us.

And when they speak of the past controversy they recall our errors; speaking so evil and harsh to our disgrace and injury and to the detriment of our church. But they make few words, concerning who has been the original instigator; that the man in prison dared tell you: We on our side had chided their teachings. I am not much surprised; for they may say it repeatedly, and prove false each time.

My sincere wish is that the man who is confined for sake of the truth, might better understand the truth. To my knowledge their teaching has not been disputed, except in the controversial article, which they would not confess, but taught the people otherwise. This was rebuked, as the apostle says: "Reprove, rebuke" We still cannot approve, any more than we could at that time, that those on their side were not afraid to say: We had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and that peace with us was impossible, which incited in the people, a great aversion of us. I wish they might better understand what it is to sin against the Holy Ghost.

I might here present several thoughts for meditation, concerning which of the following two is in opposition or agreement with the spirit of truth: One confesses a natural and spiritual avoidance of the expelled, another wishes to confess only the spiritual and opposes the natural, saying they were doctrines of men and commandments of men; one confesses that those who intentionally speak falsehoods should be expelled from the church, another will not confess but opposes it; one confesses that the kindhearted

people should not be beatified for their deeds of charity, another will not confess but opposes it; one confesses physical feet washing with his fellow member, another will not confess but opposes it; one confesses his offences which he has committed against God and his fellow men, accepts chastisement, repents, and is reconciled to God and his fellow men, another who has spoken against the Word of God, and offended his fellow men does not consider himself obligated to confess his errors.

With the Word of God you can deliberate which of these two is in agreement with the spirit of truth, and has assumed the proper course in these articles, or which has opposed this course. If you, Brother Nicholas, can understand these articles with us, as many people have understood them, and as presented by true historians referring to the manifold confessions of faith, then you can perceive where the truth to which we shall adhere, may be found. But anyone who desires to leave us, and enter into their communion, should not overlook discipline too much, but investigate the brotherhood from the Palatinate to Holland, and carefully observe the temperament of the people embracing the brotherhood. With great earnestness we have endeavored to make peace with them, and have used every means we could use with the Word of God and a good conscience, but until now, our efforts with them have all been in vain.

We have stood firm on these points with the intention to persevere therein by the Word of God, until we are informed of something better.

I therefore much prefer to keep communion with those who seek peace through the Word of the Lord, and are converted to the Word of the Lord, and strive to do His bidding, welcome reproof for their mistakes, and willingly submit to chastisement. For a long time to come those on the other side may say they are calm, and that if we are restless we should return from whence we have come. It is greatly astounding that anyone is bold enough to speak thus. It is also not for the better, that they are reposed in their tumultuous errors and sins; for many people in the world are also serene in their sins, and do not wish to be disturbed in them. It may well be determined with spiritual eyes which of us is departed from the Word and decrees of the Lord; it will be requested of him to return.

It may also be confessed by those on the other side, that intentional liars shall be expelled from the church, which is of course good if it is sincerely confessed and practiced, but they did not wish to do this in the beginning and have thereby offended us and given occasion to our fall and the division; how then can they expect to be considered innocent?

It is my opinion that they are ashamed of men to admit their errors concerning these articles, and to confess their great mistakes as a committed sin, and submit to chastisement. They do not wish to be looked upon as being wrong in the quarrel. They prefer to allow the division to remain rather than confess their sins and willingly settle the dispute. But now that they will not do this, and dare to oppose the plain command-

ment and example of our Saviour with physical feet washing; if it remains as of late; then this is not the proper method to establish peace. We know nothing more to do, for we have offered to make peace by an effective means, which we still offer, provided it can occur according to the Word and will of God. But if this cannot occur, then we honestly hope that our eternal salvation is not in their reconciliation, but in the restoration of our peace with God. Of course it could be that some on their side also confess something concerning natural avoidance, and believe that those who will not confess their sins, and refuse to submit to chastisement, but prove unrepentant, shall be avoided; but they then say that those who are repentant shall not be avoided even though they are under the ban. We, however, confess a natural and spiritual avoidance without distinction on all who are rightfully expelled. There is of course a great difference in a repentant and unrepentant person, but in avoidance the Scriptures make no distinction; for the holy Apostle Paul has not given a careless and shallow, but a precious commandment to his believers when he said: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly . . ." (II Thessalonians 3:6). He speaks of every brother; so it is undisputable that if one is rightfully under the ban, he must have walked disorderly, whether he regrets his sin or not, and the apostle commands to withdraw from such, and not to eat or work with him. I Corinthians 5. If he is then truly

repentant and requests it, he shall be reinstated in the church, and the ban and avoidance be removed; but the ban and avoidance belong together, and are bound together, for where is coercion without avoidance? For example, if admission to a forest, or a path, or other such thing is forbidden by a government, it is supposed to be avoided; if it is not avoided, of what avail then is the edict? Likewise it is the will and ordinance of God that things forbidden and banished shall be avoided without distinction. Whosoever will not do this, banishes himself with those who are banished. 5 Deu. 7 and 13. Jno. 7.

Written in the year 1698.

Ulrich Amman.

Copied in the year 1869, by me, Christian Brenneman.

A Letter of Confessions (From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1908 p. 146-148)

We, Jacob Amman, Isaak Kaufman, Nicholas Augspurger, confess that in this controversy and strict ban which we practiced against you in Switzerland we have gone far astray. For we were assembled on January 7th, 1700, and have agreed upon this Confession. We herewith acknowledge that we are deservedly excommunicated, and therefore stand blameworthy outside the church and desire to be reconciled to God and men, as much as possible; and we therefore sincerely request the patience of you all; that you forbear with us, and earnestly pray the Lord for us; that He may extend to us His pardon and grace, for we are sincerely concerned about our errors, and prefer to do penance for our sins, while we are yet alive and healthy, and we therefore once more ask your patience, for it has happened to us unaware; which I hope you can believe us, therefore have patience with us, and forgive as much as you can forgive us, and pray the beloved God for us that He might pardon us all by His grace. I, Ulrich Amman, and Christian Plank also confess as is stated above.

Further, we also confess; namely, Jacob Kleiner, John Bachman, Phillip Haegy, and John Wier, that we should have come to you and made inquiry of the affair, and not given you up so quickly and lightly, and we therefore request patience of you all. Pray the Lord for us. We are disposed to do likewise for you. May the

Lord extend help and grace to us all. Regarding Jacob Kleiner, John Bachman, and Phillip Hagi, however, these are also under the ban. John Gerber and Christian Steiner also confess the above statements to the ministers and bishops in Alsace and Switzerland.

One more confession to the brethren in Switzerland by John Good of the Palatinate: To you ministers in Switzerland and all who are grieved on my account, I confess indeed, that I too have gone astray. I therefore request patience of you all; for I deeply regret my sins, and sincerely ask your forgiveness, if I may be pardoned. I am also minded to pardon you, by the help and grace of the Lord. The reason for the difficulties existing between you and me is that I have confessed the faith with Jacob Amman and affiliated myself with him, that I should have asserted: that if Jacob Amman does not repent I could not retain farther affiliations with him. But he admitted to me he had erred, and had repented of the errors which he at that time confessed, although not as deeply remorseful as now. He also said he would submit to penance, which he now has. Knowingly I had not wanted to affiliate with schismatics, I therefore request forbearance of all ministers and fellow members in Switzerland. My earnest desire is that you pray the Lord for me, that I may labor in the good work: I am disposed to do likewise. The Lord give His grace to this end. From me, John Good of the Palatinate.

A Letter by John Bachman and others (From *Christliche Gemeinde Kalender* 1915 p. 123)

On the 21st day of January, in the year 1711, a group of men came to us at Heidelberg, by the names of Ulrich Amman, John Anken, Yost Yoder, from the Palatinate, John Good, John Gingerich, John Zook, John Kaufman, and others more from the Upper Palatinate who were also of their party. These above-named men have offered to make peace with us, provided we allowed them to continue their practice of avoidance and feet washing, and were willing to accept us again as brethren. Concerning the contumelies to which they have subjected our people, of which you well know; they responded that we should pardon each other in all things pardonable. We have neither promised nor refused to accept this offer. We preferred to think it over and counsel farther. We understood they had allowed their people to attend our sermons; we inquire your counsel as to what should be done in this matter. Heidelberg, February 26, 1711.

John Bachman, Phillip Haegy, John Jogley Schneider, Jacob Fretz, John Blum, John Miller, John Wier.

A Letter by Christian Plank (From *Begebenheit* 1936 P. 13-20)

(Note: At the end of this letter in *Begebenheit* [page 20] the year of writing is given as probably 1693. It is now generally agreed, however, that it was written sometime after the John Bachman letter, since it relates the reinstatement of John Gingerich, Ulrich Amman, and John Gerber which had been proposed in the Bachman inquiry of 1711. This eighteen-year interval also accounts for the shift in the sympathies of this author, who had started his career as a deacon of the Amish party, and was repeatedly mentioned by Amman as a witness to the various events, but at the time of this writing he persistently denounced the Amish methods.)

The love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

This information is to all sorrowful brethren and sisters who have been informed by our counter-party, the Amish; that avoidance and feet-washing had been the reasons for the division among the people, but which does not prove correct. I shall shortly make known the reasons for the occurrence of this schism.

First of all, Jacob Amman said he wanted to sojourn among the congregations of Switzerland, and that he thought almost each minister used his own distinct rules concerning avoidance. Then we went to Friedersmatt (Fribourg) into

Nicholas Moser's district, and he said to Nicholas Moser he had heard say there were ministers who beatify the kindhearted people. Then Nicholas Moser said to Jacob Amman he had heard nothing of it. Then Jacob Amman asked Claus Moser's opinion concerning avoidance. We then went to Reutenen to Peter Geiger, and also asked his opinion concerning avoidance; and he confessed avoidance.

Then Jacob Amman summoned Nicholas Baltzley of Habstetten (Thun) to that place, and charged him of beatifying the kindhearted people. Then Nicholas Baltzley replied he knew nothing of it, but if it has happened without his knowledge he asks his patience; he might well commit it to the grace and mercies of God.

We then went to Uetigen (Bern) to which place Jacob Amman summoned John Reist, and they discussed avoidance, but John Reist would not confess it. From there we went to Eggiwyl to where were summoned Peter Habegger and Peter Goldgraber, and were questioned concerning avoidance. These answered: It were good if the bishops came together and decided on a general rule. From there we went back to Friedersmatt (Fribourg), to Nicholas Moser, Peter Geiger, and Nicholas Augspurger, and it was requested that John Reist should meet us, but he did not come. About that time Jacob Amman said to Nicholas Moser that in his opinion he was unstable on avoidance, and requested that he express his personal opinion about it. Then Nicholas Moser answered: a creed accepted by a general brotherhood requires toleration; where-

upon Jacob Amman replied: You are a minister and want to learn your faith from the congregation.

Then he addressed Peter Geiger and requested his personal opinion on avoidance. He replied: they must have real patience until the ministers and brethren assemble to search the New Testament, then he would comply with its instructions. Then Jacob Amman suggested to assemble on another appointed date and manage to have John Reist present also, for he was not there this time. Then another meeting was arranged, and at the appointed time Jacob Amman and the ministers on his side came; and many ministers of the Emme Valley and many brethren and sisters were also present. We then waited for some time on John Reist and other ministers. Finally a message came from Oberthal, saying they could not come this time for certain reasons.

Then Jacob Amman nearly became enraged, and immediately expelled John Reist as a sectarian, and expelled six other ministers at the same time. There were many brethren and sisters there who entreated him to be forbearing. There was one sister who fell to her knees and pleaded with him to have patience, but it was all in vain.

Then those in the Emme Valley wrote those in the Palatinate about his severe judgment; and those in the Palatinate wrote us (the Amish party), earnestly entreating us to be reconciled, and not to cause a division, or start a new church, but much more to heal the break. Then Ulrich Amman took the letter and said he wanted to write those foolish Palatines a letter too; and he

wrote them a large letter with many scornful and scolding words, and besides other rash words, wrote: you foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you will not believe the truth; do you believe those lying, apostate, and heretical people more than us?

Those in the Palatinate would not tolerate this, but appointed a date for a meeting in Alsace, and sent word to the Amish and also to those in the Emme Valley, asking both sides to assemble, and they from the Palatinate came also. Then those from the Palatinate thoroughly investigated both sides of the contention, and earnestly entreated the Amish that they should not conduct themselves so rashly, but the requests and counsel they had given us for the welfare of our souls and the peace of the church were all to no avail. At that time we also expelled them in Alsace; and shunned and avoided all who would not help carry out these horrible proceedings; have also expelled people they had never seen. This is not a Scriptural ban, and also not a Scriptural avoidance. How then could anyone be devoted to it; as several brethren were accused of having confessed avoidance, and then retracted their confession. If avoidance had been properly introduced it had not been discontinued. For a sinner whose offences are generally known, as the Scripture teaches, and has been expelled by counsel of the entire congregation, and remains stubborn; to make him blush, avoidance is good, but such a horrifying course of conduct as is mentioned above, has made a division among the people.

Such were the real motives for which there are now two churches; and although it is claimed that several years later they revoked the excommunications and repented of their errors, which, however, cannot be accepted as true, because the sin is still manifest; for if a sin is repented of, then the sin shall be discontinued. If this had been truly repented of, then the people should have been peacefully reunited.

In regard to feet washing, however, it was neither mentioned nor in question at that time, and has not been a reason for the division; because at that time it had not been practiced at communion services by either the Amish (Alsations) or the churches in the Emme Valley. Concerning the several churches in Switzerland, and also in Alsace, who had for a season stood with the Amish, until such time that the Lord God sent them a means of enlightenment; then the ministers in Alsace and in Switzerland pointed out to the Amish, and gave them to understand that their course of action had been too rash, but it was all of no effect until the ministers in Switzerland, and several in Alsace were under the ban. But if the ban had been fully acknowledged, then the schism should have been put away, and the people urged to stand together in love, but this has not been done.

They then wanted to reinstate John Gingerich and other ministers more who had been under the ban, but the ministers in Switzerland answered them that they should not do this; as also the members of several other churches entreated them not to do this, but the ministers

assailed the members with rough words and ordered them out of the room. They neither followed nor heeded the counsel of the ministers and members in any way, but immediately reinstated Ulrich Amman and John Gerber.

The foregoing letter is written by Christian Plank, who was with Jacob Amman from the start, and was a minister to the needy (deacon), but was later ordained to the ministry of the Word by Nicholas Moser, and has left the Amish.

PIONEERS OF THE MENNONITE CREED

Struggling, differing pioneers:
What motives provoked your contentions of yore?
Was it zeal for overcoming grace,
From the risen Lord, with His kind embrace,
And the blueprint for all these years?
Or merely a race to win your case;
An effort to gain a few glories vain,
Impelling submission by fears?

Oh, no! scrupulous pioneers:
We trust you have longed indeed,
To follow your convictions
As you understood the creed;
But your incapability to uphold tranquillity
In the actions you pursued; your objectives to
intrude,
Has produced a separation instead of a reformation,
And hindered your efforts at reconciliation.

Sincere, honorable pioneers:
Who promoted these efforts since you laid them
down?
Since you finished your toils, and dried your tears,
And waited neath the altar these few hundred
years?
May we, your descendants, share your fortitude,
Till the last discordant creed is subdued;
May we ever endeavor our structure to mold
On a groundwork of precious stones, silver, and
gold.

(I Corinthians 3:9-13).
—Compiled by John B. Mast.

A CONCLUSION

by

Christian J. Schlabach

The reader has now seen the outcome of this controversy over ban and avoidance; how the issue was driven to the point of a division in the church by the personality of Jacob Amman and his fellow workers, through the act of expelling and avoiding all who would not agree with their particular views. Such vexations of group relations naturally provoked errors on both sides. Such conditions seem sad to us who can now review their mistakes, and yet the most discouraging thing of all is the fact that even with our knowledge of their sad experience, these same contentions are still causing one division after another in our own time, which ought not to be. We should be of one accord and one mind, as the disciples were when as many as three thousand souls were converted in one day. With a united missionary effort, how much more we might do in "winning souls for Jesus."

Boycott and shunning foster strife, contempt, and ill will in general, often driving the sinner farther away, instead of gaining him back, especially when he is not expelled according to New Testament standards. An expelled person should be treated as a brother and not as an enemy. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company [sacramental fellowship] with him, that he may

be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" II Thessalonians 3:14, 15. How can we admonish anyone with whom we have completely disassociated ourselves in all physical relationships? "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matthew 18:17). The inference here is, that we should conduct ourselves toward such, the same as we do toward people of the world. We have no company with the world in communion service, or other church affairs, but in everyday social and business life we mingle with worldly neighbors, eating and drinking with them. Those who would advocate observing avoidance in natural eating and drinking should then also avoid the outside world. "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (I Corinthians 5:9-11). Paul here refers directly to eating the holy sacrament, which we observe at communion service. "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast [the Lord's Supper], not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice

and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread [emblem of His broken body] of sincerity and truth" (I Corinthians 5:6-8).

It is true that the Jews practiced avoidance in natural eating and drinking, but was it a command of God, or just another of their own traditions? Christ fulfilled the law, and did away with these traditions. The Jews were too much entangled with such commandments of men, and their eyes were blinded to the realities of their promised Messiah, so that they rejected Him when He came, and were scattered among all nations for their unbelief. We find in John 9:22 and 12:42, that they had agreed among themselves to expel all who would confess Him to be the Christ. "And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:10-12).

In Galatians 2:11-14 Paul refers to a certain incident where Peter had eaten with Gentiles, but for fear of the Jews "withdrew and separated himself" from them, and shunned them again. Paul here rebuked Peter for again falling back on the "works of the law." Galatians 3 deals with this problem. Here Paul says, "No man is justified by the law in the sight of God, . . . for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live

in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:11-13). Christ was our perfect example, and if we are His disciples we must follow His footsteps. All those traditions of the elders (bishops), and commandments of men, with their grudge toward the Samaritans and Gentiles, have been nailed to the cross, and are, or should be, a thing of the past.

In Matthew 15 the Pharisees asked Jesus: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition" (Verses 2, 3)? "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Verses 7-9). His disciples then called His attention to the fact that the Pharisees had been offended by this saying, to which He replied: "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Verse 14). Do we not have some such leaders today, who are perhaps sincere and well meaning, yet blind to certain Scriptural truths? "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. . . . Ye blind

guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matthew 23:13, 24-28).

Zacchaeus, a rich chief among the publicans, hastily descended from the sycamore tree, "and received him [Jesus] joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner" (Luke 19:6, 7). The Jews had much difficulty in getting away from their notion of shunning as we have already seen from Galatians 2. Paul almost continually had to do with this problem. "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake" (I Corinthians 10:27). Paul makes one exception in the verse following: If the host dedicates the food to idols, eat it not for his sake, which also agrees with the conclusions in Acts 15:29. (Please turn to Acts 15.) The first eleven verses in this chapter refer to a certain "sect of the Pharisees *which believed*," insisting on keeping the law of Moses. Verse 5. These were

clinging to their old traditions, and we are sometimes made to wonder if we might not have such *believing Pharisees* among us to-day. Paul says, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. . . . And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath he quickened [made alive] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the *handwriting of ordinances* that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. . . . Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh" (Colossians 2:8-14, 16, 20-23). In this chapter Paul refers to Jewish traditions pertaining to eating and drinking, and superstitions respecting the new moon, Sabbath days, and holy days. Such myths, and man-made traditions, are not of Christ (verse 8) and should not occupy a Christian's mind.

We have many denominations in the world to-day, and each believes itself to be of the true faith. Some stress immersion baptism; others

make a hobby of speaking in tongues, as exclusive evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Some abstain from eating meat on Friday; others insist on observing Saturday as the Sabbath, instead of Sunday. Some put special emphasis on shunning and believe it is a sin to eat or drink a natural meal at the same table at which an expelled person may be eating. Referring again to the last three verses in Colossians 2, we have those also who adhere to such commandments and doctrines of men, making a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body. In verse 18 he calls it "voluntary humility . . . vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." Some display such self-induced humility, and neglect of the body by abstaining from the use of automobiles, tractors, telephones, electricity, and the like, which all serve a useful purpose, and "perish with the using." That is, they all wear out from being used. Those who are "subject to [such] ordinances" (verse 20) say: "Touch not; taste [eat] not; handle not"; yet, Paul says such things "all are to perish with the using." He also says: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:8, 15, 16). "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:10, 11). This last phrase in Luther's German translation reads: "Schicket euch in die zeit," which literally

rendered in English would be, "Comply with the times," with reference to the changes, or advances of the times. In China and India, and other such backward nations, people starve to death because their methods of food production have lagged far behind their increase in population. We, in America, would be starving too, if we were still harvesting grain with scythe and flail, which was a quite efficient method in our great-grandfather's time. I still remember when our churches commenced getting binders. Certain members were bitterly opposed, and quarreled about this thing for years, and held up communion services about the affair. It finally made a division in the church, but within a short time the opposing faction had the binders also. Why all this commotion? Our God is a changeless God; the same yesterday, today, and forever. The twine binder came on the market in about 1883, when I was twelve years of age, and if it was wrong to use the machine then, why should it not also be wrong in 1950? Today that humble device is already outmoded, even in many of our so-called Old Order churches, who no longer regard self-propelled combines of any serious consequence. We repeat, Why all this commotion, even neglecting the Lord's Supper by it? "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God [or Christ] by your tradition" (Matthew 15:3)?

The Apostle Paul, and other apostolic church fathers, traveled in ships, or whatever means of transportation was available in their time. Nowhere did they renounce conveniences which served a useful purpose to the people's welfare,

but they did sharply rebuke worldliness, immodest apparel, and evil habits. (See Romans 12:2.) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Corinthians 7:1). Filthiness of the flesh involves drunkenness, and the use of tobacco. "All unrighteousness is sin" (I John 5:17). In German it is "Alle untugend ist sünde." I have seen ministers and bishops of our plain people smoking and chewing tobacco. They made no secret of it, but walked the streets, conforming to the world by displaying cigars in their mouths; but, if a member made his suspenders from plain elastic instead of denim, he could not be permitted to take part at communion. What will the Lord have to say about such a religion when He comes again? In my latest travels through the eastern states, I was shocked to see elderly men smoking cigarettes, a filthy, world-modish habit, from which I pray that they may repent. Can you imagine Christ smoking and chewing tobacco, or extending His hand of fellowship, greeting with an holy kiss, brethren whose teeth and beards are stained with tobacco juice? "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [untugend]" (I John 1:9).

Concerning the dress question, we are definitely opposed to either extreme, and are convinced that there is too much style and fashion creeping into the churches. "And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all

such as are clothed with strange [worldly] apparel" (Zephaniah 1:8). "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Timothy 2:9, 10). "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Peter 3:3, 4). The remark is sometimes made that as long as the heart is at peace with God, the outward display of costly array, or other pompous appearance, will not matter. This is true, but we have the cart before the horse. Such display not only will not matter, but it vanishes when the peace of God enters, as naturally as darkness vanishes before the rising sun. A consecrated child of God is more concerned about the temporal and spiritual welfare of his fellow men, and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3), than he is about the details in the clothes on his (or her) mortal body, and is not ashamed to wear a modest devotional covering. Such superfluous items as neckties, lacework on flashy-colored garments, dressing or waving the hair, and the like, have no appeal "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints" (I Corinthians 1:2). Such pompous array pertains to children of the world, "For all that is in the world, the lust of

the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:16, 17).

Another evil creeping into our nonresistant churches which deserves mention, is the practice of displaying flowers at funerals, which is fashioning after the world, and is an enterprising commercial idolatry; foolishly wasting God's substance, which He entrusted to us, and which might be used to better advantage in supporting missions. We are inclined to look down on the ignorant heathen who worship totems and other hand-carved images, and are doing likewise, but in a different way. A similar evil is extravagance in weddings that are conducted in a worldly manner. These evils are creeping into the churches, while the shepherds are being lulled to sleep, and induced by the majority vote system to tolerate them, instead of using the "old-fashioned" way of, "thus saith the Lord." The liberals will always win by majority vote, and the church will drift as long as the system is continued. "Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock: the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened" (Zechariah 11:17). "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will

visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:1, 2). "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezekiel 33:8, 9).

I hope, and pray, that somehow there may be a church-wide revival, that the church may be restored to a Biblical foundation, and that there may be a reunion of all its numerous factions; being "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10).

Christian J. Schlabach

'Tis a snare to compromise:
May we see what underlies—
Vanities, and dress display,
Drifting to a broader way.

Raise the banner, lift it high:
The time, beloved, draweth nigh
When we'll be His chosen Bride;
Lost souls: this joy you'll be denied.

Is not this enough, dear friend,
To help us shun the subtle trend?
Even though temptation's strong:
Worldliness, you know, is wrong.

In God's power, may we stand:
With the blood-washed heavenly band:
So lost mankind in us may see
The risen Lamb of Calvary.

—Selected.

